The conscience

lectures on casuistry

Frederick Denison Maurice

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LECTURES ON CASUISTRY.

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THE CONSCIENCE

LECTURES ON CASUISTRY

DELIVERED IN

The University of Cambridge

BY

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE
PROFESSOR OF CASUISTRY AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY

THIRD EDITION

London
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1883

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TO

EDMUND LUSHINGTON, Esq.

PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

My Dear Lushington,

You kindly sent me a copy of those most interesting Remains of Professor Ferrier, which owe so much to the affectionate diligence and critical judgment of Sir Alexander Grant and yourself. It is not to prove my gratitude for this valuable gift that I take the liberty of dedicating these Lectures to you. Even the pleasure and honour of associating my name with yours might not have tempted me to that vanity. But a writer about the Conscience ought not to let any burthen rest upon his own. After I had delivered these Lectures, I turned to Ferrier's 'Philosophy of Consciousness,' and found that he had anticipated several of the remarks which I had made on the word I, and on the mischief of smothering it under general phrases such as '*Mind*' or '*Reason*.' I cannot be sure that sentences of his essays which struck me many years ago when I read them in *Blackwood's Magazine* may not have fixed themselves in my memory, and that I may not unawares have mingled his thoughts with my own. If so, I cannot do better than direct your attention to the plagiarism, and

beg my readers to trace it to its source. They will find their recompense in the knowledge they will acquire of Professor Ferrier's teaching if it destroys their interest in mine.

You will perceive that in other respects there is very little in common between these rough Lectures and the books, so conspicuous for rich and various culture, which you have edited. I have had no notion of producing a 'Philosophy of Consciousness.'

My aim has been to associate the Conscience with the acts and thoughts of our ordinary existence. I have abstained, some will think even pedantically, from the use of philosophical terms: I have only touched on philosophical systems when I fancied they were interfering with the rights and duties of every wayfarer. If I can lead a few young men in what I must still call your University, to think more earnestly, to live more bravely, I trust that the many obvious deficiencies of my book will not hinder you from owning me as a fellow-worker.

Believe me,

My dear Lushington,

Very sincerely yours,

F. D. MAURICE.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

SINCE these Lectures were published there has appeared an exceedingly interesting volume entitled "Colloquia Peripatetica, by the late John Duncan, D.D., Professor of Hebrew in the New College of Edinburgh." These Colloquies are reported by the Rev. William Knight, who seems to be admirably qualified for the task which he has undertaken. His friend must have been a man of rare originality, varied culture, great vigour in expressing thoughts which were worthy to be expressed and remembered. Mr Knight has listened to Dr Duncan's utterances with reverence and sympathy, and has the high merit of not distorting or colouring them by opinions of his own.

The reader who shall give himself the benefit and gratification of studying this short

volume (it will suggest more to him than many of ten times its size) will find that I have not been bribed to speak well of it by any praise which Dr Duncan has bestowed on me. My only excuse for alluding to it is that it contains the severest censure on my writings which they have ever incurred; though they have not been so unfortunate as to escape censure. If Dr Duncan's complaint of them were established, I should own at once that I was absolutely disqualified for speaking on Casuistry or Moral Philosophy; that the less young men have to do with me, the better it will be for them. He says that 'my system is pure illegality*;' that Law is by me banished from Ethics or is swallowed up in Ethics. What my system is or does, I really am not able to say. I have always professed with great earnestness that I had never constructed a system; that if I did it would exclude most of the truth which I feel to be the support of my life, would include most of the falsehoods against which

* *Colloquia Peripatetica*, p. 40. Edmondston and Douglas, Edinburgh.

I protest. But that I hold any Morality which banishes Law to be inhuman Morality—to be inconsistent with the Order of God's Universe, I think every reader of these Lectures and of those on Social Morality will be constrained to admit, whatever may be his judgment in other respects of them or of me.

It is, unfortunately, impossible to ascertain what passages in my writings conveyed this impression of my 'illegality' to Dr Duncan. If I ever meet with them and find the sense which he perceived in them to be their natural sense I shall be more anxious to blot them out than any one else can be. Against any ordinary criticism even a writer who is naturally thin-skinned becomes by degrees tolerably hardened. One proceeding from a man of such learning and worth as Dr Duncan I have thought it a duty to notice, less for my own sake than for the honour of the University which has permitted me to be one of its teachers.

CAMBRIDGE,
Jan. 1872.

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LECTURE I.

ON THE WORD 'I'.

Charges against the Moral Teacher.

YOU may wonder at the title which I have chosen for my first lecture. I have taken it because I can find none which explains so well what will be the subject of all my lectures; what kind of facts will be considered in them, what claim they have to be practical.

(1) *He is a vague declaimer.*

There are grave doubts among men of the world whether the student of morals has any real subject to treat of. He can talk much about the blessings of virtue and the mischiefs of vice. But Lord Macaulay, who spent a great part of his life in dealing with virtues and vices as a legislator, or in recording the effects of them as a historian, said, you may remember, that the most brilliant writer upon them did not deserve half the gratitude from mankind which is due to the maker of a substantial pair of shoes. Again, the moralist may dwell upon different opinions which have descended upon us from other times, or have been produced in our own. He may speak of Sensualists and Utilitarians and Transcendentalists. Grand names assuredly; but how do they or the doctrines which they represent concern the business of life? Who that is occupied with facts can care about them? Who that is seeking for

(2) *He is busy with idle disputes.*

LECT. I.

amusement will not find elsewhere what is much more lively and stimulating?

(3) *He prefers the possible to the actual.*

Or if the moral teacher adopts the distinction which is sanctioned by one of the ablest and most accomplished of his class—if he says that his business is with what ought to be, that of other students with what is—can there be a clearer or fuller confession that he means to leave the actual world for some other world which he has imagined?

Such remarks as these you will hear in ordinary society, from dull men and clever men, from those who most profess the sober wisdom of age, or from those who most affect youthful fashions. Nor am I safe even in a place specially devoted to learning. Unpleasant comparisons may be made between my work and that which goes on in other lecture-rooms. The Geometrician, the Geologist, the Astronomer, the teacher of any branch of natural history, can point to things with which he has to do; if he discovers secret laws they are laws which have reference to these things, without a knowledge of which they cannot be safely or effectively used. Of what things can I speak which answer to these? Shall I not be leading you away from objects which can be handled or seen, or reached by indisputable demonstrations when they cannot be handled or seen, into a region of shadows, where distinct apprehension, where secure proof is impossible? If the shadows ever become realities, must they not have undergone the change because I have travelled into a province which is not mine, because I have usurped duties which are much better performed by others?

(4) *He cannot point, like the physical teacher, to facts.*

The Word I—its claims to

These are formidable difficulties; if I cannot remove them, I can scarcely hope that you will listen to me

LECT. I.

with patience. Beginning then with that objector who especially boasts the title of the practical man, I venture to ask, 'Does the word *I* seem to you an unpractical word, one which only concerns shadows? You do not act as if this were so. You do not speak as if this were so. You are rather angry if reverence is withdrawn from this word, if there is a hint that any can be equally dear to him who utters it. In making your calculations about the doings of other men or your own, is it not your maxim that this I is entitled to a primary consideration? Well! it is this which the Moralist claims for his investigation. He agrees with you in your estimate of its importance. He thinks as you seem to think, that whatever may be the value or interest of the things which are seen and handled or tasted or smelt, I who see and handle and taste and smell am at least as interesting to myself as they can be.'

be real and practical generally confessed.

Then I should turn to you who frequent class-rooms in which mathematical or physical or philological or historical enquiries are pursued. I should remind you that in each of these rooms there is a teacher who calls himself I, that there are pupils every one of whom calls himself I. But the I is to be kept as far as possible from the lines and angles and parallelograms with which the geometrician is occupied. The student who is thinking of himself will not attend to the propositions of Euclid. One great duty of the teacher in any branch of physics will be to warn you against the danger of confusing the objects which you contemplate with notions and prepossessions of your own. The I is not the subject there, but a dangerous intruder. Wherever any language is cultivated, the I cannot be thus forgotten. If you take up Homer you will find

Not treated of by the mathematical or physical lecturer.

Its importance to the Philologer.

LECT. I.

that when he wants to express the distinction not between Trojans and Greeks but between both and the horses which they tame, the dogs which look up to them as masters, he calls them μέροπες. Articulate speech is the characteristic of *men*. How does the speech become articulate and human? What is the difference between the cries of beasts or the songs of birds which Homer must have known intimately, and the winged words which went forth from the mouths of his heroes? Each of them called himself I. There is the difference, there is the articulation. Ascribe that word to a cat or an elephant, and you are sure that you are in the region of fable, that the man is imputing to a lower race that which is the necessary condition of his own. The philologer is much exercised by the different appearances which the I makes in different dialects; how it hides itself in some amidst the acts or passions in which it is concerned, how it comes forth obtrusively in others, as for instance in our own. He almost suspects that he could detect various forms of civilisation in this diversity; he is sure that the scarcely articulate, almost brutal, utterances of the savage are severed from the organic discourse of educated nations by this fact, that the one chiefly represents the impressions which are made on the beholder by the sights, on the hearer by the sounds, of the outward world; that the others have learnt to rise above these sights and sounds and to express themselves. But though he may perceive how this word has penetrated into the heart of human speech, though he recognises it as at once the most universal and the most exclusive of all words, he cannot look further into the marvel. He notes it and passes on.

He recognises its human worth; but cannot investigate it.

Its place in History.

The student and critic of national or of general history—or of any historical epoch—finds himself amidst a world of I's. They perplex him almost equally by their varieties and by the curious uniformity which he discovers in a number of their acts and movements. Sometimes he is tempted to resolve all events into the strange irregularities, eccentricities, contradictions of human beings, sometimes he flies to phrases about the species or the laws of Nature or Destiny. He is not satisfied with one solution or the other. He knows that they are both awkward expedients to escape from a difficulty, attempts to explain the *ignotum per ignotius*. He cannot rid himself of the I; what it means he leaves some other to interpret.

The Historian leaves it to the Moralist.

It is to this question, which is left with such testimonies to its significance, as a waif or estray by all those who are not afraid to face other questions, that I believe the student of Morals must address himself. He ought to explain why this I is so troublesome to the physical student, why it casts its shadow over all his enquiries into the order of the outward world. He ought to show why it has struck its roots so deeply into language. He ought to assist the historian in casting off some of those vague generalities which obscure the facts that he is describing, and yet offer themselves to him as such convenient modes of accounting for them. I do not think that the moralist can advance a step, can make out any reason for his existence, unless he girds himself to this task. And yet no one has more opportunities for evading it, more hints from illustrious practitioners of his art how he may evade it. Instead of using the word I, which men use in their common speech, he may talk about Individuality or

How the Moralist seeks to

LECT. I.

escape from the consideration of it. His consequent failure.

Personality. And though, if he is rudely asked 'what is your personality, what is your individuality?' he may be obliged rather ignominiously to reply that it is a more philosophical way of saying 'I myself;' he will find so much comfort in this phraseology—such a graceful plea for it as being a refuge from egotism—such an apparent justification for it in the necessity of alluding to the mass of human creatures and not to a single unit of the mass—that the word 'I' will vanish out of his school dialect, whilst he is resorting to it every hour, almost every minute, if he is speaking not as a school-man but as a man. So the link between the two characters is broken; his talk is of men, but that which characterises a man is gone; you have killed him that you may dissect him.

Professor Grote's plea for Egotism.

At whatever risk of appearing egotistical—even of being so,—at whatever risk of exchanging grand technical words for common words, such as men speak in the market-place—we must make an effort to show that morality means the life and practice of each person who walks this earth and calls himself I, that it is not wrapped up in theories and speculations about some general human nature which is no man's particular nature. I alluded in my inaugural lecture to a testimony of my excellent predecessor upon this subject. I will now quote his words in full, they exhibit so strikingly the method which I should wish to follow in these Lectures. "I send out these pages," says Professor Grote in the preface to his *Exploratio Philosophica*, "with much misgiving, not as to the substance of them—all that I can say about that is that they represent real thought—and of what value the thought is can only be seen when it is compared with the thought of

others,—but as to the way in which the manner or method (if it is to be called method) of them may be taken. They are full of *Egotism*. I can only say that in reading what others have written, it is a matter continually occurring to me how much better it would have been if they had been more egotistic; how much better we should understand what they meant if they had described how the thing had come to present itself to their minds, and let us see their thoughts a little in the forming; and also how many pages of literary history ending at last in an unsatisfactory result would have been saved if this had been the case."

Mischiefs from the absence of it.

Introduction to Exploratio Philosophica, p. xlv.

Every one who reads this passage, even if he knows nothing more of the writer, will say that he could not have been an egotist in the English sense, nor an egoiste in the French, that he must have been a man of singular modesty, with an unusual disposition to be fair and tolerant towards others, with a zeal for truth which overshadowed the desire to be himself the discoverer or promulgator of it. The egotistical method—he was too diffident even to give it that name—was attractive to him precisely because the thought of one person, if it is really his, calls forth the thought of another, to resist it, to conspire with it, or to complete it. Surely it is so with the most illustrious men and the least illustrious. No great man really does his work by imposing his maxims on his disciples; he evokes their life. Correggio cries after gazing intently on a picture of Raffaelle, 'I too am a painter,' not one who will imitate the great Master, but who will work a way for himself. The teacher who is ever so poor in talent or information, but who is determined to speak out the convictions he has won, who is willing now and then to

It implies no vanity.

It provokes thought in other men.

LECT. I.

give some hint of the struggles through which he has won them,—leads one or another to say 'I too am an I.' The pupil may become much wiser than his instructor, he may not accept his conclusions, but he will own, 'You awakened me to be myself, for that I thank you.'

The Anti-Egotists of the last Century.

Mr Grote applied his maxim to what is called Intellectual Philosophy. How important it is for the student of Ethics or Morals I have become convinced, whilst I have thought over some of the great writers who devoted themselves to this study in the last century, and have compared their influence with that of a philosopher who preceded them by 2000 years, and whom they greatly admired. The writers to whom I allude—they are those whom Sir James Mackintosh and Dr Whewell have described to us with so much ability—were men of serious purpose, with a desire not merely to talk of goodness, but to produce actual goodness according to their standard of it. They busied themselves with composing treatises on Human Nature or on Man. They were emphatically *not* Egotists. They were not generally as much interested in the Greek teachers of Ethics as men of a former generation had been. They dreaded the return of the influence which Aristotle had once exercised over Christendom; they looked upon Plato as a high-flown mystic. But they reverenced Socrates. They believed they could see through the reports of his imaginative disciple that he aimed at being real and practical, that he had, according to the old saying, brought Philosophy down to the earth. I do not think that their praises of him were exaggerated, or that they put these praises on a wrong ground. But when I ask for the secret of that

Their admiration of Socrates,

specially real and practical character which all ages have concurred in attributing to Socrates, I find it in his Egotism. I might give you instances of what I mean from either of his disciples, but Xenophon's testimony in this case at least might be more suspected. He was a soldier and a man of business; when he speaks of Socrates as practical, we might fancy he gave his master credit for the quality which he preferred to all others, and which he had acquired in the world. If Plato was the dreamer that some suppose (all will admit that he was a man of lofty imagination, a born poet), he might be glad to represent Socrates as a dweller in the clouds, not as a citizen of the earth. The passage which I shall choose from him, is taken from one of his most poetical dialogues; it occurs at the beginning of the Phædrus. Socrates and Phædrus are sitting near the spot from which Boreas was reported to have carried off the nymph Oreithyia. Phædrus wishes to know whether his friend accepts that legend as it stands, or adopts one of the physical explanations that had been given of it. Socrates has heard such explanations; they are ingenious; he admires the cleverness of those who invented them. But if he resorts to this kind of interpretation for the story of Boreas, he must treat Gorgons, Centaurs, Chimæras, after the same fashion. Such a task would be tedious, interminable. 'And, my friend,' he says, 'I cannot find leisure for it. I have not yet complied with the precept of the oracle; I am not yet able to know myself. It seems to me ridiculous whilst I am in this ignorance to busy myself with subjects which lie at a distance from me. Allowing then those mythological questions to settle themselves as they may, accepting

who was emphatically an Egotist.

Specimen of his Egotism.

LECT. I.

the ordinary traditions about them, I devote myself to the question what sort of creature I myself am, whether I am some wild beast more composite in its structure, and more fierce than Typhon, or a gentler animal with a nature partaking of the noble and the divine.'

It is the secret of his practical wisdom,

Here is the Egotist. And here is the practical man we have all heard of. He who could dismiss all questions about Boreas and Oreithyia that he might settle accounts with himself, that he might ascertain what he was, might indeed be said to bring philosophy out of the cloud-land to the *terra firma*. That, in the effort to do so, he should be accused of liking the region into which he was obliged to travel, cannot surprise us.

and of the love and hatred which he inspired.

Nor can we wonder either at the power which he had of attracting men, especially young men, to him, or at the bitter hostility which he provoked. There is no attraction in general formulas and propositions; there is an immense charm in one, however uncouth in his appearance, who can enter into desires and perplexities which he has first realized in his own life, and through which he has fought his way. There is no terror in mere propositions and formulas; there is great terror in one who arouses us to remember that which we had rather forget; he would take from us the Lethe cup; we may be willing that he should drain the cup of hemlock.

Influence of Egotism in the century of Butler and Paley.

The geniality of Socrates, his hearty humour, his appreciation of all the forms of common life, his habit (indicated so well in the passage I quoted from Mr. Grote) of showing his thought, not formed, but in the process of formation,—were nearly wanting in his accomplished panegyrists of the 18th century. And, therefore, all their talent and all their desire to

be useful could never obtain for them the influence which was exerted by men whom they could often despise for want of taste, by men whom they could often condemn for more grievous faults than any against taste, but who had the courage or the audacity to reveal that which had passed in the inmost sanctuary of their being. Amongst us the disciples of Wesley announced, often in grotesque phrases, often with a mixture of wild and morbid fancies, facts of which they had become aware, not in the world without, the world which they saw, but in their own very selves. The grotesque phrases might be ridiculed, the morbid fancies might be detected and exposed by those who were acquainted with diseases of the body or the mind. But the facts were recognised by men whose circumstances and education had been altogether different from those of the persons who disclosed them; chords which had been silent in the hearts of refined men and women responded to the touch sometimes of very coarse fingers; general moralities were rejected as feeble; he who used the Ego was hailed, for there was an Ego in the hearer.

The Methodist in England.

There was a man who spoke in altogether different accents from those of the Methodists to the people of France. Amidst the voices of philosophers who were listened to with wonder and delight in the salons of Paris, because they struck at hypocrisies which were becoming intolerable, and did *not* strike at vices which were fashionable, there echoed from the hills of Switzerland the Confessions of Jean Jacques Rousseau. They were the utterances of a disturbed, even of a deranged mind; were outrageous in their display of the writer's evil acts and thoughts; did not spare the polite

Jean Jacques Rousseau.

LECT. I.

society of the day, or the notions which were popular in it. But in spite of their strangeness and madness, in spite of the disgust which they often excited, they had, for Rousseau's countrymen and strangers, a fascination which was found in no dogmas however destructive, in no jests however keen and brilliant. In the most superficial of all societies there was still a craving to look below the surface; where men were most crushed by conventions, there was still a welcome for any one who could prove that he maintained an existence, though it might be a very incoherent existence, under the pressure of them.

Power of his Egotism in France.

I quite admit that there is in the English character something which shrinks from both these forms of egotism, even whilst it gives them entertainment. The silent self-contained man who avoids such exhibitions commands our respect; we have a certain dislike, even contempt, for the man who relieves himself by whispering his confessions into the ear of the public, though we are not unwilling to use our privilege of listening. The reserve of such writers as Butler often tells us more of their characters than any discoveries which they could make respecting their history. They hide, under language which concerns the world, many a struggle which they have gone through in themselves; slowly we become as much convinced that a man is speaking to us in these books as if he admitted us into his closest privacy. If such reticence were lost from our literature we should lose much that is most precious in it, much that has been ultimately very powerful. If we banished it from our own characters they would suffer a more serious injury; the most sacred treasures would be profaned. That danger should

Limitation of these remarks.

The Worth of Reserve.

Reserve and Egotism not incompatible.

always be remembered when we commend Egotism. There must be some way of escaping these perils while we satisfy Mr Grote's demand, some way of uttering ourselves without talking about ourselves, some way of carrying on living communications with each other, even when we dwell least on our idiosyncrasies—when our dialect is even less moulded by our own habits and prepossessions than that of the philosophers in the last century was.

Such a method I have wished to indicate by taking for the title of my Lecture 'The *word* I.' 'If you must have that I for your subject,' some one may say, 'why not tell us of the *thing*, why give us the mere name of the thing?' I answer, I cannot call this I a thing; you would all be scandalized by such language. If the I were a thing I should have nothing to do with it; you would get your knowledge of it in the rooms where things are treated of. But, if not a thing, what shall I say of it? Am I to allow that it is a mere abstraction, that it points to no substance? Every man who is most busy in the affairs of the world would raise his voice against me if I did that. 'What! you put this slight upon number one! You say that I am a nonentity. What then, pray, is not a nonentity?' A question which I should find much trouble in answering. If in this perplexity I resort to the phrases Personality or Individuality, I have told you already what consequences I foresee must follow from that proceeding; how, after all, I should be driven to the shame of giving I in exchange for those splendid polysyllables. In despair then of getting a substitute for this word, I content myself with drawing your attention to the fact that you do use it, that you must use it whenever you

The Word points not to a Thing,

nor to an Abstraction.

LECT. 1.

The Mystery and Power of Words.

speak the speech of men. And so I would lead you to reflect a little on the grandeur and power of words; of those words which we repeat most frequently, which we trifle with most. Not the words which are appropriated to the service of Art and Philosophy, which are withdrawn from daily usage, but those which are passing from hand to hand, those which are the current coin of every realm, those which are continually liable to lose their image and superscription from the friction of society, are the truly sacred words; in them lies a wealth of meaning which each age has helped to extract, but which will contain something for every fresh digger. The word *I*, with its property of being demanded by a whole community, and yet being only capable of denoting a single unit, is a key to that mystery in words which makes them interpreters of the life of individuals, of nations, of ages; the discoverers of that which we have in common, the witnesses of that in each man which he cannot impart, which his fellows may guess at, but which they will never know.

Common words the sacred words.

Treatment of words by Socrates.

This use of common speech was understood by Socrates; it enabled him to detect a number of tricks which the young men of Athens, in their zeal to make words serve the purposes of persuasion, were practising upon themselves; it enabled him to bring to light a multitude of thoughts and convictions that were lying in them crushed under the weight of customary and traditional notions, or of the vanity which aspired to catch at the newest and most paradoxical notions. If he could persuade them to account to themselves for the force which they were giving to words, if he could shew them what force lay in words which they did not recognise, he would teach them to reverence an

inheritance which had come to them from their fathers, and at the same time to feel that unless they reduced it into possession it might be their burthen and their curse. In no way had he so much learnt to fulfil the oracle 'Know thyself,' as by reflecting on the words which were continually passing from his lips; in no way could he so effectually stir his pupils to obey the same oracle as by leading them to cultivate the like habit. Often, no doubt, he was betrayed into extravagances and puerilities by his passion for etymology. If we would observe carefully how men of the old world fell into that temptation, if we would faithfully use any lights which philology or experience have supplied to preserve us from it, modern students might have a great advantage over the ancient. But they often, it seems to me, turn their dread of what they describe as verbal quibbles to a mischievous purpose. They refuse to recognise any life in words; they quote Horace as an authority that it is only usage which confers any value upon them. I wish they would consider that passage in the Ars Poetica which they claim in support of their doctrine. Horace illustrates by a beautiful analogy from Nature the changes which words may undergo in different periods:

His method open to correction but not obsolete.

The opinion that we may put what sense we please on words

> Ut silvæ foliis pronos mutantur in annos
> Prima cadunt; ita verborum vetus interit ætas
> Et juvenum ritu florent modo nata vigentque.

He recognised a winter and a spring, a decay and a renewal for words. The usage therefore

> Quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma loquendi

can never mean the fashion which makes a word bear a certain impress without reference to its origin or

LECT. I.

not sanctioned by Horace.

history. He says that Virgil and Varius could renovate and adapt to their own time words of Ennius and Cato which had become rusty, that

> Licuit semperque licebit
> Signatum *præsente* nota producere nomen.

Take the other course, and we may produce a philosophical slang, or a slang of any other kind; but we shall debase the language of our fathers, and make it useless for the education of our sons.

The words which seem to indicate a double self.

There is one class of words which especially rebels against arbitrary definition, and which may be especially profitable for the end that Socrates proposed to himself. I mean such words as 'Consciousness' and 'Conscience.' There are a multitude more which we discover by degrees to be of the same kind and to point in the same direction as these; but these are centres from which light falls upon the rest. They are inseparably connected with that pronoun of which I have been speaking in this lecture. Take away the I from language, and they must disappear also. There is no demand for them in any of the things which I see or taste or handle. They come into existence only because there is an I who sees, tastes, handles. Were there no such words, the Delphic oracle which Socrates tried to obey would seem the most ridiculous ever uttered. How can I know myself? Are there two creatures then, I and myself? It does sound monstrous. But, monstrous or not, these words involve that duplicity, they associate it with all my acts and thoughts, they remind me that I am stooping to the condition of a brute, not asserting my rights as a man, if I disavow it. For they are not words which belong to the inarticulate nomenclature of the savage; they

are like the I, characteristic portions of organic civilized language; they appear in the discourses which have exercised most influence over bodies of men, as well as in those which discover the fears, conflicts, hopes that belong to the secret chamber.

Casuistry is occupied with them.

They are full of difficulty, full of apparent contradiction. Yet I must grapple with them at once if I pursue the course which I have marked out for myself. I have proposed to treat of Casuistry. Now *the* subject of Casuistry is the Conscience. The illustrious man who thirty years ago restored this chair to dignity and efficiency, and began to endow it with some of his vast intellectual treasures, abandoned that title for his lectures, deeming Moral Philosophy a more suitable one in this age. The Conscience therefore was only *one* of the subjects which he had to examine; he could deliberate where he should introduce it into his system. But whilst I yield the greatest weight to his arguments as well as to his authority—whilst I entirely accede to his doctrine that the intentions of founders may often best be fulfilled by a departure from the letter of their instructions, whilst I have no doubt that the main duty of a teacher is to consider how he may meet the requirements of his own generation—I am led by these very maxims to accept the term which Dr Knightbridge chose for his professorship, as denoting the first division of Moral Science. I have told you in this lecture that I dread the temptation to lay down a general scheme of morals or of human nature. The examples of eminent men in former days who have adopted that course—the craving for facts, the impatience of mere opinion, which I welcome as some of the most hopeful signs of our time,—alike lead me to desire, as my im-

Casuistry why useful for this age.

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mediate predecessor did, a more egotistical kind of study. Casuistry, it seems to me, is such a study. It brings us face to face with the internal life of each one of us. The world without, it leaves to the examination of other enquirers. The Casuist's business is with him who looks into that world, who receives impressions from it, and compels it to receive impressions from him.

Fichte the Egotist among modern philosophers.

There is a writer of the eighteenth century—he lived into the nineteenth—who was singularly unlike those anti-egotists of whom I spoke, one who more than any philosopher since Socrates took the question, 'What am I?' as the subject of his thoughts. I should not introduce him here if some of his books had not been set down in the list of those in which students for the Moral Sciences Tripos are to be examined. That being the case I wish that you should know the man better than his books; for he deserves to be known better; his books are valuable chiefly as they help us to know him. I may not have occasion to refer again in any part of this course to *Johann Gottlieb Fichte;* but to this present lecture he specially belongs. He will shew you that an Egotist, in Mr Grote's sense of the word, may be a very brave and noble man, one of the sternest antagonists of that egotism which we ought all to hate.

Fichte's education.

Fichte was a poor man, one however who contrived to obtain a higher culture than rich men generally enjoy; he went to Switzerland and became a teacher of boys. In that occupation he discovered what seemed to him the secret of all philosophy.

Some admirable lines of our own poet, very appropriate to my present subject, will tell you how that secret was brought home to him.

Tennyson's In Memoriam XLIV.

The Baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that this is I:

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of 'I' and 'me,'
And finds I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch.

So rounds he to a separate mind,
From whence clear memory may begin,
As through the frame that bounds him in,
His isolation grows defined.

What learning is without a man who learns.

Well, Fichte's lot was cast among those who were thus learning the use of the I and the Me. He did not adopt a theory about the Ego in himself, and the Ego in his pupil; he found that one responded to the other. There was no learning if there was no such communication; the name signified nothing. A vast amount of what was called learning existed in Germany, philosophical speculation without end, heaps of information that could not be measured. But the speculator, what was he? who was informed by all that information? Fichte believed that the vocation of the scholar must be something different from that which the German schoolmen were dreaming of; he believed it must be connected with the vocation of a man.

The scholar's vocation.

The rights of men.

And now there rose a cry beginning in France, spreading through Europe, about the Rights of Men. The ears of the schoolmaster opened to that cry; it met cries which had been in his own heart long before. He liked it better because it rose from hovels, not palaces or colleges. But *was* each of these men claiming his rights? Had they not been reduced into a dead mass of animals; were they not now feeling their animal

The right to be a man.

LECT. I.

power and trying to put that forth for the destruction of those who had not recognised them as men? Must not the scholar's vocation be to give as many as he could the sense of their right to be men; their right not to be lost in a crowd; their right to be each verily and indeed an I? For this end and in this spirit Fichte worked in Germany. But against what enemies! The issue of the cry for right had been the domination of an emperor. The great Bourbon had said, The State, it is I. Napoleon trampling on the Bourbons said, The Republic, it is I. He said that not only in his own land. Austria and Prussia bowed before him; the country which Rome could not conquer crawled at his feet. In Jena, Fichte had proclaimed that no tyrant can bind him who does not bind himself. In Jena, it was shewn that Prussia had bound herself, and therefore that no army such as Frederic had bequeathed to her could save her from being the bondsman of the foreigner. There were none so hateful to Napoleon as the scholars of any land which he subdued; that is to say if they cared for men; he was willing to patronise them if they would only speak of things. It was specially perilous for any one to maintain the ground which Fichte had taken up. But he never flinched. The hymn of freedom and of its future victory,

The Napoleonic I.

The prophet of Freedom.

> Unawed he sung amidst a slavish band,

till the slaves began to shake their fetters and to believe that there might be a deliverance from them. The men of Fichte's own class awoke first. In the lowest depression of Prussia they established the University of Berlin, as the Dutch had established the University of Leyden during their struggle with Philip II. Then

came an army born of the new craving for liberty. The military arrangements of Frederic were gone; a Spirit came to take their place. Fichte would have gone forth to the battle; his monarch commanded him to stay in the city and do his country's work there. He lifted his voice to denounce the compromises which Austria tempted Prussia to make. He heard that the last Frenchman had crossed the Rhine. He was saved from seeing the disappointment of his hopes from Germany, the degradation which it had to undergo from those who now claimed to be its emancipators. His wife, whom he had loved from his youth up, nursing the wounded in the hospitals, took a fever. He caught it from her lips and died.

His opportune death.

I have told you nothing of Fichte's system. I mean to tell you nothing. When he spoke of that which had become a part of his life, of his very self, he seems to me a grand teacher; when he tried to speak of that which was not himself, or to put himself and the universe into a set of formulas, I lose sight of him. I am glad to know that opponents rose up to vindicate what he disparaged. I am glad to believe that he was restless within the walls which he had raised around him. He belongs, as I said, emphatically to my opening Lecture for this reason. I wanted not only to give you an example of a great egotist; but to shew you why I have pleaded for egotism. It is that each of us may reverence his own life and the life of his fellowman above all theories that any have formed about him or them. It is that we may study the problems of life seriously and truthfully, whether we can make out a theory about them or no. It is that in studying these problems we may profit by the lessons of those with

Difference between the Man and his System.

Use of Fichte's example

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in the study of English Moralists.

whose dogmas or conclusions we may the least agree. When I speak of the Conscience I shall not turn to Fichte. I think our English writers will give us more light on that subject. But I doubt whether we shall be able to use that light, coming to us as it does in many broken rays, if we do not take our stand upon that ground to which Fichte was led by his stern experiences. Think of the word I, and you will be able to enter upon the study of the word Conscience with some hope of a satisfactory result.

How an able teacher who aims at making a System of Morals may assist those who dread System.

I have alluded to one deviation which I am making from the course that was marked out by Dr Whewell. What I have just said—indeed the whole of this Lecture—will indicate another, it may seem to some a more striking difference, from him. He avowedly endeavoured to construct a system of Morality. I have declared that I have no such object, that I shall even strive diligently against the wish to pursue such an object. I am not the less rejoiced that he made the attempt, and made it with his characteristic vigour and courage, because I do not aspire to imitate it. He has added very much to the stores of our moral experience, and whilst pleading for System, he has furnished us with a series of warnings against the perils of System such as no one could have given who did not bring to the study of Morals a great knowledge of physics and the methods of physical investigation. These warnings I hope never to forget. He has urged us to see in familiar words the recognition of permanent and imperishable truths; he has bidden us not be content with the current notions of these words, but carefully sift them that we may discover their radical force; he would have us proceed step by step in our enquiries;

The sphere of the Moralist.

he says we must not allow affected respect for feelings and emotions to be an excuse for vague undigested thoughts. In the second of his lectures on Systematic Morality he asserts with great force and eloquence the maxims which I have been trying to maintain this morning, that the moral student is as much occupied with realities as the physical student, and that he has as wide a field to examine. 'He has' (I must quote his words, for I would gladly take them as the motto for this Course of Lectures) 'for his region of thought everything about which other men think most eagerly, all that occupies the mind of the historian, the poet, the tragedian, the comedian, the advocate, the statesman, the poor, the rich, the recluse, the man of the world; he has to consider not only all the means which they have to gain their purposes; but he has also to weigh their purposes against each other; to compare the ends of life according to each view; to decide how far each lies in the road to the far end, the true aim of human life...For the *microcosm*, the little world of man, is really not less than the *macrocosm*, the great world of Nature.'

Whewell on Systematic Morality, p. 48.

LECTURE II.

THE WORD 'CONSCIENCE'.

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The question what Conscience means in the vulgar tongue more important than what it means in learned books.

MANY definitions of the Conscience are to be found in books of Philosophers, many accounts of its operations. We may consider some of these in due time. I should be sorry to neglect them, for each thoughtful man will supply some hint which may make our thoughts clearer. But, as I said in my last Lecture, we must begin with asking ourselves what meaning we have given to the word and do give it in our ordinary discourse. We are using it on the most vulgar occasions. We say that a tradesman who sends in an extravagant bill, or adulterates the food which he sells, has no conscience. And yet we do not really admit that he or any man is without a conscience. We appeal to it as if we thought it was in him, and could respond to the demand we make upon it.

I am conscious of sights, sounds or tastes.

I observed in my last lecture that the adjective Conscious is inseparably connected with the word I. Nothing, I said, which we taste or smell or handle would suggest it to us. I am conscious of the taste of the orange or the smell of the rose. I never dream that the orange or the rose is conscious. I *know with myself* what impression I have received from the rose

or the orange. The difference of the effect of sights or scents on different men or women, as on different classes of animals, may depend on peculiarities of their bodily structure; but when you have taken all account of these, if you understand them ever so perfectly, you will have to say at last, 'It is I to whom the pleasure or the pain comes which is brought to me through any sense.' If I were not there the words pain and pleasure would carry no signification with them. I can only tell anything about either, because I am conscious of it.

I am conscious of the truth of propositions.

Dr Whewell remarks that the word conscious has been far too much restricted by some moralists; that I have a right to say, 'I am conscious that two straight lines cannot enclose a space.' Assuredly if I am not conscious of that truth it is not one for me; I have taken no hold of it. And yet we all feel that in general we are adopting a pompous and unnecessary phraseology if we introduce the word conscious in either of these cases. It is enough to say, and therefore it is better to say, 'I taste or smell,' than 'I am conscious of a taste or smell.' Dr Whewell would not have been pleased with any pupil in his Mathematical Class Room who, instead of repeating the postulate as his fathers did before him, improved it by speaking of certain internal convictions which he had about it.

When this word becomes necessary.

But there are some cases in which we cannot dispense with the word, in which none other would serve us so well. Œdipus meets Laius on a cross-road going to Thebes. There is an encounter. Laius is slain. Is Œdipus conscious of what he has done? Of course he knows that he has killed a man who would have killed him. He meant to do that. But is he conscious—does

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he know with himself—what sort of act he has done: is he aware that he is a parricide? The story which the genius of Sophocles has so wonderfully unfolded is the story of the awakening of this Consciousness, of the discovery to Œdipus of what he has done, of what he is. And this Consciousness is fresh and alive years after, when he himself is a father and a king. The act done so long ago is with him then. It has become a part of his own existence.

The Consciousness which is awful.

The moment I pass from the consideration of the things with which I have to do to the consideration of that which I am, this problem confronts me; it is this conscience which binds the different parts of my existence together, which assures me that the past still belongs to me. It seems very terrible. But banish it, and there is no drama, no biography, no history: human existence becomes the dreariest blank; men only brutal. There is, however, a Consciousness which is not grand or terrible, which we are wont to connect with what is petty and ridiculous. We say about some picture of a man or woman or child, How self-conscious he or she is! We mean that the person has been thinking what attitudes would be most becoming; how it would be best to appear when other people should see the likeness. This way of *knowing one's self* we pronounce very disagreeable, and worse than disagreeable; it implies insincerity, and must lead to greater insincerity.

The Consciousness which is vain and trivial.

We certainly do not mean this, or anything approaching to this, when we speak of a *conscientious* man. Not this, even the reverse of this. And yet we do suppose the conscientious man in some sense to take account of himself, to be aware of what he is doing.

We do not always use the epithet 'conscientious' as one of strong commendation. We may not like the person on whom we bestow it. There may be something like a sneer or a curl of the lip when we observe 'That man is always thinking what he ought to do or ought not to do.' Such surly judgments, hastily thrown off, are often of great value. They indicate, better than formal explanations, what force we give to the words which we utter most frequently and familiarly. I am not sure that if we sought long we should find a more exact account of a conscientious man than this, He is one who is always considering what he ought or ought not to do; or whether there is a more exact description of the Conscience than this, It is that in me which says, I ought or I ought not.

How we may get a popular definition of the Conscience.

If we adhere strictly to this expression on which we have stumbled, we shall be able to recognise a fact which is of quite infinite importance to us. We shall clear away difficulties which eminent men have created in their eagerness to magnify the conscience, as well as objections which other eminent men have raised against the acknowledgment of it. The fact is this. However we may account for it each of us does say 'I ought' and 'I ought not.' We cannot weed those expressions out of our dialect or out of the dialect of any civilised nation. Like the word I they have established themselves in language; it could not exist without them. How is that? Do you think it would be so if *we* could exist without them, if the *I* and the *ought* had not some very close affinity? We need not perplex ourselves with the question how soon a child begins to say I 'ought.' We know it does not at first say I. It describes itself in the third person. It learns,

This popular definition a strict and available one.

The I and the ought inseparable.

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some tell us, to say I by imitating those who are around it. Be it so; that may be the way in which it acquires the *sound*. The question for practical people is, what the sound signifies to the child. *What* is imitated in the use of the word? To what account does the little mimic turn its new possession? And so about the *ought*. That sound may also be caught from neighbours old or young. When caught how does it work? Is it a disease which can be cured by certain skilful medicines, or is it to be cherished as necessary to health and life? At all events, however you may have come by the word, frankly own to yourselves, each of you, that you have it; that you cannot part with it. You must use it to denote your desire to be rid of it. You must say 'I *ought* not to be troubled with this ought.'

Does imitation account for either?

And steadily remember that the I and the ought are twin words. Like the *Siamese twins*, they are not without violence or risk of death to be severed from each other. I impress that remark upon you because it will save you many confusions hereafter if you thoroughly take it in. I said that you complained of the want of conscience in the shopkeeper who charged you more than you thought was reasonable for articles you had purchased of him. You ascribe a conscience to him because he calls himself I, just as you do. And you cannot suppose that he is like you in that respect without supposing that like you he says to himself 'I ought and I ought not.' But I am only *conscious* of that which passes in myself; as he is only conscious of that which passes in himself. There is no doubt in some persons a very wonderful apprehension and divination of that which others are thinking, imagin-

I impute a Conscience to another because I am conscious.

ing, purposing. Those who really have that gift,—who do not merely fancy they have it and make all kinds of false, suspicious, and illnatured guesses about their neighbours—we call men and women of genius. Sympathy has much to do with genius, perhaps is the essence of it. But it cannot exist, I apprehend, except in a person who has a lively consciousness of what is passing in *him*. He is awake to that, and so can make more than a guess at what is passing in me. This divination therefore does not interfere with my maxim or even offer an exception to it. The act of conscience is an act in me. It means 'I ought or I ought not.' I may pass judgment on other men's acts; but that is another process; I am abusing terms and what the terms represent if I identify it with the Conscience.

I cannot transfer my Consciousness to another.

Perhaps you will say to me 'What! if I see my friend pursuing a course of conduct which I am sure will ruin him, is it not my conscience which bids me warn him of his danger, though I know he may quarrel with me, even hate me for doing so?' Yes, I fully admit that it is your conscience which bids you warn your friend. What I affirm is, that the conscience does bid *you*, and no one else. When you speak to him you try to arouse *his* conscience. You will effect nothing for him unless you arouse it. And therefore it is of great practical importance to remember the distinction which I have drawn. Many hard pharisaical censures, which lead to no result, are the consequences of our forgetting it, as well as the omission of many counsels which would benefit our neighbours because they would be the fruit of our experience of ourselves.

I can only call it forth in him.

And thus another perplexity may be taken out of our way. 'What must we call the Conscience? Is it

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Is the conscience a Faculty?

a special faculty? Is it a faculty in all men or only in some men?' Butler describes it as a faculty of human nature. Dr Whewell demurs; it is according to him only an exercise of the Reason. Which opinion are we to adopt?

Just because I hold the fact of the existence of a conscience to be one in which each of us is deeply and practically interested, I decline to enter into these controversies between learned men. If I called the conscience a faculty, I am not at all sure that I should understand my own meaning; I certainly should have no right to expect you to understand me. A faculty should from its derivation have reference to doing; when we speak of a man of considerable faculty, we understand one who can readily turn his hand to any work which is committed to him. There is nothing in the 'ought' or 'ought not' of the conscientious man which intimates that he has any peculiar capacity of doing. I do not think that I remove the objection or gain any additional clearness by introducing the words, *our* nature or *our* mind. I rather incur the risk of losing that which I have dwelt on as most characteristic of the word Conscience, its adherence to the singular pronoun. And as I have not yet tried to explain what I mean by Nature or Mind or Reason—supposing I am able hereafter to offer any such explanations—it would be very much out of order to thrust in such phrases, as if we knew all about them at the outset of our enquiry. It was almost inevitable that Butler, following that method of which I spoke in my last lecture, should begin with assuming Human Nature as the basis of his remarks on the Conscience. He has behaved with perfect honesty. He has been at great

What is a Faculty?

Butler's Human Nature.

pains to explain what Human Nature signifies and does not signify, in his acceptation of it. We owe him much gratitude for this service. Whether we are satisfied with the explanation or not, it throws light upon a number of difficult points which may come under our notice in future lectures. But that egotistical rule which I am trying to follow does not allow me to meddle with any of these problems at present. According to that rule the question, 'What am I,' takes precedence of all that concern my or our nature; if so, it will also take precedence of all questions about my mind or our mind, my reason or our reason. We are not then in a condition to decide whether Butler is right, or Dr Whewell is right, or whether both are wrong, or whether there is some way of reconciling them, so that neither may be wrong. But we may thankfully accept their joint testimony in support of a fact which each of them had realized in himself, and which each of us may realize in himself.

Why we cannot start from it.

I am not the least afraid of bringing the question whether there is a conscience to this test. I am only afraid lest our decision about it should be embarrassed by the introduction of other questions to which the test cannot be applied. If I am told there is a Conscience in Human Nature, I begin to ask whether there are not the widest conceivable differences between the persons to whom this Nature is attributed, and whether what is true about one may not be untrue about another. Especially when this Conscience is credited as it is by Butler with the grandest functions, when it is appealed to as the highest of all authorities, the question will suggest itself, Do you say that of every man's Conscience, or of some particularly exalted Con-

The question; Whose Conscience do you mean? How treated

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science? Dr Whewell was aware that Butler had laid himself open to cavils of this kind. He tried to avoid them. "We cannot," he said, "properly refer to our "Consciences as to an ultimate and supreme authority. "It has only a subordinate and intermediate authority "standing between the supreme law to which it is "bound to conform, and our own actions which must "conform to it, in order to be moral." He adds a little further on, "As the object of reason is to deter- "mine what is true, so the object of Conscience is to "determine what is right. As each man's reason may "err, and so lead himself to a false opinion, so each "man's conscience may err, and lead him to a false "moral standard. As false opinion does not disprove "the reality of truth, so the false moral standards of "men do not disprove the reality of a supreme law or "rule of human action[1]."

(a) *by Dr Whewell,*

This language is moderate and cautious; yet it has provoked a criticism which I will read to you from the 15th chapter of Mr Bain's volume on the Emotions and Will.

(b) *by Mr Bain.*

His objection to a standard Conscience.

"What then," asks Mr Bain, "is this standard? "Where is it to be found? Until it is produced we "have nothing to discuss, affirm, or deny. Is it some "model conscience like Aristotle's serious man (ὁ σπου- "δαῖος), or is it the decision of a public body authorised "to decide for the rest of the community? We have "no difficulty in deciding what is the standard of truth "in most other matters, but what is the standard con- "science? That *must* be got at, or morality is not a "subject to be reasoned or written about."

[1] *Elements of Morality*, Vol. I. p. 161, 2nd Ed.

"Dr Whewell (he continues) appears to presume "the existence of certain moral ideas without reference "to any individual mind whatever, concerning every "one, and yet originating with no one. He sets up for "morality a standard having a degree of independent "existence, such as hardly can be conceived, and which "does not exist with reference to anything else. We "have standards of length, of measure, of weight, "which even although embodied in material objects, "can hardly be said to have the independence here "contended for. In constructing the imperial yard, "gallon, or pound weight, a certain number of persons "concur in adopting a definite unit, and these persons "being either themselves the governing body of the "nation, or being followed by the actual governing "body, give the law or so dictate the standard for "themselves and all others. It is quite true that indi- "viduality is controlled or overruled in this matter, "but not by abstract, unseen, unproducible power. It "is one portion of the community agreeing upon a cer- "tain choice and the rest falling in with that. Every "dealer must bring his weights and measures to be "tried by the authoritative standard, but he is at no "loss to say who are the authors and maintainers "of that standard. So with Time. When we are "called upon to adapt our watches to Greenwich time, "it is not a standard beyond humanity. The collective "body of astronomers have agreed upon a mode of "reckoning founded upon the still more general recog- "nition of the solar day as the principal unit. At "Greenwich Observatory, observations are made which "determine the standard of this country; and the po- "pulation in accepting that standard know or may

How other standards are established.

Authority of governing bodies and men of Science.

Objection to abstract unproducible powers.

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"know that they are following the Astronomer Royal "with his staff, and the body of astronomers generally." pp. 291, 292.

Whether these illustrations from pounds, gallons, and watches, confute or confirm the doctrine of an immutable moral standard which Dr Whewell asserted—whether the arguments from the weight of tradition, of professional observers, of mere numbers, tend to prove the impossibility or the necessity of such a standard,—whether Mr Bain is himself less or more chargeable than Dr Whewell with appealing in his treatment of the Conscience to "an abstract, unseen, unproducible power,"—are questions which may all come before us in due time; the last I shall have to consider in the next lecture. Here I am constrained to admit that even a statement so qualified, as that in the *Elements of Morality*, does lay the author of it open to the charge of imputing an indefinite authority to *the* Conscience, while we are not told in what particular person it dwells. But now supposing that 'I ought and I ought not,' are the formulas of the Conscience, does it strike you that we must produce a model Conscience before we can affirm that each of us so far as he is an I uses those formulas? Of course Mr Bain is at full liberty to say 'I decline to reason or write about your doctrine of a Conscience, unless you do that.' No British subject is compelled to write or reason about a subject except on his own terms. But if the point to be ascertained is whether that which I call a fact is a fact or a fiction, one would fancy that the vulgarest specimen of our race would supply a much better test than some person of rare excellence. After thinking much who might serve the purpose of an experiment most effectually, I

Difficulty if we assume even a partial authority in the Conscience.

If the Conscience means 'I ought' the vulgarest instance is the best.

can remember no one whom on the whole I should prefer to Mr Tennyson's *Northern Farmer*.

The Northern Farmer.

You will not complain, I hope, that he is a fictitious character. He is real enough. He is very strictly an individual. Yet he could not have been described to us by any writer who had not taken a careful observation of his class. We at once recognise him as a member of our own tribe; an Englishman to the very bone; one whose brutality we cannot put at a distance from us and ascribe to any people as being more characteristic of them than of us; one who has a manliness breaking through the brutality, which as patriots we may think is also not uncongenial to our soil. There is no doubt about the lower stratum. The tastes of the Northern farmer are altogether animal; he has no dream of what Mr Arnold would call culture; his thoughts about what will become of himself when he leaves the world, or how the world will go on without him, are equally bewildered; his moral standard has certainly not been fixed by any body of men answering to those who have determined so satisfactorily the standard for the gallon or the time-piece. How is it that one who has all these tendencies and inclinations can be a subject for art, that we are able to contemplate him without utter disgust? A Conscience is there. We are not in the presence of a mere drinker of 'yäale.' Even about that there is a rule from which he cannot depart. And he has stubbed Thorneby waste, because he has a duty to the land. He has gone to church Sunday after Sunday, not because he understands what the parson has said, but because the parson, being a parson, ought to say it, and he ought as farmer to hear. He has too a sense of having

His brutality and humanity.

Tokens of a Conscience.

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done something which he ought not to have done. He thinks he may have made compensation for his wrong doing; but he is not at ease about it. He recurs to it, tries to balance it against good deeds. An I is there; the past cannot be left behind; it is with him on his death-bed. We have encountered a man like ourselves in his degradation and his dignity. The strength which we disguise under flattering phrases about Anglo-Saxon muscle and toughness lies in the 'owt.' That rises out of the coarse nature of the farmer as out of a prison-house or a grave. But it is the same which spoke forth clearly, musically, effectually in Christopher Columbus, when he determined that he ought to cling to his belief in a new Continent if all the wise heads in Europe derided him, if all the crowned heads trifled with him; in Martin Luther, when he said that he ought to go forward to the Diet though there were as many devils in Worms as there were tiles on the houses; in John Hampden, when he said that he ought not to pay the forty shilling tax of ship-money, if the resistance to it involved him in ruin, even if it ended in a civil war for his country. How different the standard of any one of these men was from that of the Northern farmer, I need not stop to explain; how different the sense in each of the power which could enable him to follow that standard. But the Conscience of an obligation, involving some effort, endurance, sacrifice, dwelt in them all; the presence of this light is most conspicuous in the farmer from the darkness of the ground which throws it back.

Everything in this poem depends upon the ought.

It is the same in every higher instance.

But can we find no picture which stands in direct contrast to this one, and which may teach us what the effect on a man would be if the Conscience were—not

The pendant to this portrait.

eliminated from it,—but reduced to the smallest possible force and vitality? Modern literature in this case also is most helpful. You know the story of Romola probably better than I do. You will remember therefore the full-length and admirable portrait of the young Greek, Tito. With a perception of all sensual delights as exquisite as ever belonged to his race when it was in the fullness of its glory, with the accomplishments which made it the teacher of Western Europe in the 15th century, with energy for all the intellectual pursuits which were so dear to the Italians of that day, failing in no subtlety of mind or grace of person or aptitude for affairs, able to attract the admiration of the wisest statists, and to win the heart of the noblest woman, what is there deficient in this man? This only. The words 'I ought' and 'I ought not' have vanished from a vocabulary rich in the spoils of all languages capable of expressing every delicate and refined apprehension. That is his one want, and for that—it is a victory of genius for which we cannot be too thankful—the authoress of Romola has compelled us to regard him with a contempt and a loathing which it is impossible to entertain for the Northern farmer.

The refined Greek.

This character also I dare not call fictitious. It is true in all its essentials, even in its details. The maxim of Tito, 'Seek all the pleasure you can get, avoid all the pain,' is the maxim on which thousands of young men in England, with or without the refinement of the Greek, are trying to act. Most of them trouble themselves little about philosophy. There are some who think that they can plead the authority and sustain themselves by the arguments of an eminent philosopher, not a Greek, but an Englishman; not of the 15th cen-

His maxim of life widely accepted in modern England.

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tury, but of the 19th. Of him I must say a few words.

Rejection of it in the practice of an English Philosopher.

Mr Jeremy Bentham was, I should imagine, more utterly unlike Tito in his conception of the purpose for which he existed than even the Northern farmer. He scorned delights and lived laborious days. Instead of devoting himself to the luxury either of a sensual or an intellectual life, he toiled for the improvement of prison discipline, for the overthrow of prejudices about transactions between the lender and the borrower, for the removal of abuses in various departments of legal administration. With great eagerness for the assertion of a general theory, he never excused himself from the trouble of entering into the minutiæ of practice. The greatest happiness of the greatest number was his watchword; he showed that he sincerely valued this object above all his private interests. He was, moreover, thoroughly an I. He defied public opinion in his opinions, and in his mode of presenting and enforcing his opinions. He worked on in his own way; severe, even fierce, in his censures and contempt of that which he supposed to be mischievous and foolish; resolute in his assertion of what he believed to be useful and logical.

Justification of it in his doctrine.

What possible plea can those who have adopted the Tito scheme of life find for claiming Mr Bentham as their ally? The smallest plea imaginable if they studied his example, and tried to frame themselves upon that; a very tolerable plea, I think you will admit, when you read these opening passages of his *Principles of Morals and Legislation.*

Pleasure and Pain our Masters.

"Nature has placed mankind under the government "of two sovereign masters, *Pain* and *Pleasure.* It is

"for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as "well as to determine what we shall do. On the one "hand, the standard of right and wrong, on the other "the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to this "throne. They govern us in all we say, in all we do, "in all we think; every effort we make to throw off "our subjection to them, will serve but to demonstrate "and confirm it. In words a man may pretend to "abjure this empire, but in reality he will remain sub-"ject to it all the while.

"The principle of Utility recognises this subjection, "and assumes it for the foundation of that system, the "object of which is to rear the fabric of felicity by the "hands of reason and of law. Systems which attempt "to question it, deal with sounds instead of sense, in "caprice instead of reason, in darkness instead of "light.

* * * * *

Every system which does not own their supremacy nonsensical.

"The principle of Utility is the foundation of the "present work; it will be proper therefore at the out-"set to give an explicit and determinate account of "what is meant of it. By the principle of Utility is "meant the principle which approves or disapproves "of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency "which it appears to have to augment or diminish the "happiness of the party whose interest is in question; "or, what is the same thing in other words, to promote "or to oppose that happiness. I say of every action "whatsoever, and therefore not only of every action "of a private individual, but of every measure of Govern-"ment. By Utility is meant that property in any "object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advan-"tage, pleasure, good, or happiness (all this in the

Pleasure, Good, Happiness, synony-

LECT. II.

mous expressions.

"present case comes to the same thing), or (what comes "again to the same thing) to prevent the happening of "pain, evil, or unhappiness to the party whose interest "is concerned; if that party be the community in "general, then the happiness of the community; if "a particular individual, then the happiness of that "individual.

Definition of a Community.

"The interest of the community is one of the most "general expressions that can occur in the phraseology "of Morals. No wonder that the meaning of it is often "lost. When it has a meaning it is this: The Com-"munity is a fictitious body composed of the individual "persons who are considered as constituting, as it were, "its members. The interest of the Community then is, "what?—the sum of the interests of the several mem-"bers who compose it.

How we find out what is the interest of a Community.

"It is in vain to talk of the interest of the Com-"munity without understanding what is the interest of "the Individual. A thing is said to promote or be for "the interest of the individual when it tends to add to "the sum total of his pleasures; or, what comes to the "same thing, to diminish the sum total of his pains."

The Principle of Utility.

"An action then may be said to be conformable to "the principle of Utility, or, for shortness' sake, to "Utility (meaning with respect to the community at "large) when the tendency it has to augment the hap-"piness of the community is greater than any it has to "diminish it."

I omit two or three sentences which refer specially to maxims of Government; then we come to this:

The words 'Right and Wrong,' 'Ought

"Of an action that is conformable to the principles "of Utility one may always say either that it is one "which ought to be done, or at least that it is not one

"that ought not to be done. One may say also that it "is right it should be done; at least that it is not wrong "it should be done; that it is a right action; at least "that it is not a wrong action. When thus interpreted, "the words *ought* and *right* and *wrong* and others of "that stamp bear a meaning: when otherwise, they "have none[1]."

and Ought not,' to what extent they may be tolerated.

Surely a disciple of Tito has a right to exclaim, when he reads these sentences, 'I am the true Ben-'thamite. You who boast of that name and yet spend 'your lives in seeking for the reformation of what you 'deem abuses, even if you can plead the precedent of 'Mr Bentham himself, are utterly inconsistent men. 'You defy the vengeance of those deities, Pleasure and 'Pain, whom I, in accordance with your creed, acknow-'ledge as my sovereigns; the one to possess the service 'of my life, the other to be induced by all possible 'bribes to leave me alone. You, after all, are mimick-'ing the young Hercules in the fable: I am convinced 'that he was a fool.'

Claims of the Tito school to be the orthodox Utilitarians.

Many men of this sort however, instead of claiming to be Mr Bentham's followers, call him a hard dogmatist; perhaps hold that their fine sentimentalism, or their religious faith, gives them a right to speak scornfully of one who merely cared for Utility. His hardness seems to me far better than their softness—the barest Utilitarianism which is in earnest, than a Sentiment and a Religion which are only an excuse for self-indulgence and contempt.

Some of that school affect to despise Mr Bentham.

I will not point a moral against others, and avoid the application of it to myself. As I have pleaded for

Instance of this folly.

[1] Bentham's Works, Vol. I. *Principles of Morals and Legislation*, c. 1.

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egotism I will commit a flagrant act of egotism, very humiliating to me, I hope of some good to you. I remember what no other single person in the world will remember, that when I was an Undergraduate in this University I wrote a foolish parody on a book of Mr Bentham, who was then living. It was the easiest thing possible to travesty his style, which was full, especially in his later days, of obvious peculiarities, very interesting to a real student of thought and language, merely tempting an idler such as I was to ridicule. I do not suppose so silly a composition did harm to any one but the writer. A gnat's sting may annoy a giant, so it might have given a moment's distress to the old man, if he had met with it; I trust as scarcely any one else read it that he never did. But slight as may have been the consequences of the act, my conscience says distinctly, 'I ought not to have done it.' I shewed, by doing it, that I was wanting in reverence for grey hairs, and for the continuous effort of a man through a long life, at the risk of pain, at the cost of pleasure, to effect what he thought good for his fellows. If I had not been more a victim of his theory than he was, I should have paid greater honour to him.

An act may be wrong without reference to the pain which it inflicts.

I make this confession because the recollection of an incident, in itself so trifling, illustrates one of the most serious and awful problems of the Conscience. Its records are permanent. Acts that to others are dead, still live for the doer of them. Coleridge tells the story of an ignorant servant girl who, in the delirium of a fever, repeated sentences of Greek and Hebrew, which she had heard her master repeat years before whilst she was sweeping his study. He deduces this lesson from the tale. "It may be

The testimonies of the Conscience imperishable.

"more possible for heaven and earth to pass away, than "that a single act, a single thought, should be loosened "or lost from that living chain of causes, with all the "links of which the free-will, our only absolute self, is "co-extensive and co-present. And this, this perchance "is that dread book of Judgment, in the mysterious "hieroglyphics of which every idle word is recorded."

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Biographia Literaria, *2nd Ed. Vol.* I. *p.* 119.

LECTURE III.

THE CONSCIENCE AND ITS MASTERS.

LECT. III.

Points already ascertained.

THE conscience in me says I ought and I ought not; so far we arrived last week. There is no difference about the question whether these words 'ought' and 'ought not' do exist in our language, whether there are not equivalent words in the language of every civilised nation. There is no difference about the question whether they are deeply fixed in human speech; no one seriously dreams of extracting them out of it. Nor, I believe, if we understand one another, will there be much hesitation in admitting the maxim for which I have been contending, that none of the things I see or handle suggest the word; that the moment I speak of myself, it starts forth full armed.

What Mackintosh makes the characteristic of Ethics.

That is the explanation of an opinion to which I alluded in my first Lecture. A very eminent writer on Ethics, Sir James Mackintosh, says that other sciences are conversant with what is; that the science of Ethics is conversant with what ought to be. The distinction was plausible in itself even without considering the authority from which it proceeded. Yet if we accepted it, Ethics seemed transferred from the real world in which we dwell to some other imaginary world. In

Objection to this opinion.

that case I was sure we should get no serious attention for them in this busy practical age. Dismissing therefore that opinion, without examining what might be the arguments for it, we asked whether there was no other difference between this study and those with which we are engaged elsewhere. We lighted upon this. We could not find that the question 'What am I?' is considered by any teachers, though it is continually suggested by the business of the world, as well by every debate in the schools. To grapple with this question seemed to us the function of the Moralist. If so, he cannot be less immediately occupied with that which is—with existing facts—than any physical student. His business cannot be carried on in some distant Atlantis, nor can he be engrossed in the search for one. Nevertheless an acute thinker like Sir James Mackintosh, who was also a man of the world, was not likely to throw out a hint which had no substantial worth. In pursuing our own course we have discovered the worth of it. The ought does not belong to things —it does not suggest some vague possibility for *their* improvement—it is linked inseparably to me. It may be that when I use it most emphatically I am least inclined to imagine some different condition from that in which I find myself. Perhaps I ought to be acting more in conformity with this state than I do act; perhaps I ought not to be doing so many things which are inconsistent with this state.

How it may be defended.

This was unquestionably the doctrine of a writer for whom Sir James Mackintosh entertained a very high admiration, Bishop Butler. I have already referred to those discourses of his on Human Nature, which occupy so conspicuous a place in the list of subjects for the

Butler's dislike to any conceptions of an order which we frame for ourselves.

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Moral Sciences Tripos. I have spoken of them as especially bearing on this question of the Conscience. If you would understand them you should be aware of the intense dislike which Butler felt for all schemes by which an Order made out of our fancies is substituted for the one in which we are placed. His other great work, the *Analogy*, is full of vehement even scornful expressions towards those who fashion worlds for themselves, and are not content patiently to examine the characteristics and indications of that wherein they are sent to live and work. He exhibits precisely the same temper in these discourses. He seeks to find out what human nature is, not what it might be or ought to be. Though a preacher, he is anxious to exclude all notions of divinity which would interfere with this design. And therefore the office which he assigns to the Conscience is primarily that of warning us that we should not do acts which disturb the harmony of this Nature, —what Shakespeare calls 'unproportioned acts.'

What is conformity to Nature?

That is Butler's principle. He demands a Conscience to exercise a control over our thoughts and acts, to declare which are and which are not consistent with the Order or Constitution of our Nature. But then Mr Bentham tells us that according to this Order or Constitution of Nature, Pleasure and Pain are our Sovereign Masters. And though we may not understand this lofty phraseology, we are wont to say in plain prose that we find it natural to take what we like and to reject what we dislike. If that is what Mr Bentham means, I should be afraid to oppose to him some general theory of what is natural, even if there were ever so much to urge in favour of it. I would rather at once give up the dispute with him so far as it is a verbal

Concession to Bentham as to the word Nature.

one, and admit that if my Conscience tells me I ought not to take what I like and to reject what I dislike, my Conscience is bidding me not stoop to my nature, but resist it.

Do I then give up what I take to be Butler's meaning in these statements respecting human Nature, because I find myself puzzled and entangled by the terms which he has chosen? No; for I recur to my old question, 'What am I?' There are a few simple answers to that question which shew me that there is an Order in which I am placed, a real order, not an imaginary one—not an order which might be desirable but which exists. I *am* certainly a son, I *am* a brother, I *am* a citizen. Perhaps I *am* a husband, perhaps I *am* a father. And if the enjoyment of any pleasure or the avoidance of any pains leads me to acts which are inconsistent with any of these positions, my Conscience says 'I ought not to enjoy that pleasure, I ought not to avoid that pain.' Let the enjoyment or the avoidance be as natural as it may, it involves a departure from the order in which I am placed. I care nothing about ideals or possibilities. It is a violation of my actual state; a disturbance and interruption of that.

Traces of an Order.

Human relations.

Let us see then to what we have come. Bentham tells us that we are under certain obligations. So far we are agreed. In using the words 'I ought,' I confess that I am under an obligation. Next, he says the obligation is not one of mere force. I am not moved as a stone is moved, by external violence. So far also we are agreed. Thirdly, he says that there are certain influences of pleasure and pain acting upon me, and that it is natural for me to yield myself to these influences. Once more, there is no difference. I confess

The point of divergence from Bentham.

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these influences. I feel the force of them; I am not angry that they should be called natural; it does seem to me natural to bow before them. But here our strife begins. You tell me that I must yield to these motives; that when I use the word *ought* I only mean, if I mean anything, that I do what they tell me. I say I mean something when I use the word ought, and that I never did mean that; I say no one has meant that by the word; no one less than Mr Bentham. The word signifies to him what it signifies to me, what it signifies to every one, precisely the reverse of this; it is a self assertion, a denial of the claim of external powers to rule me. Pleasure and Pain are not things which I can see or touch or taste; they are secret influences which come to me through my sight or touch or taste. I cannot find them by dissecting or analysing the things through which I receive them. If I were not, they would not be. They have no business therefore to set themselves above me. Every time any man or woman or child says 'I ought,' it says 'I am under an obligation which is not to you.'

Ought and ought not involve a conflict with Pleasure and Pain.

To what then? If we said to Nature, we should retract our previous concession. Moreover we should incur the peril of Mr Bain's denunciation against 'those who set up abstract, unseen, unproducible powers.' But if I shew by broad patent facts that I am in a certain order—an order which affects me at every moment—an order into one part of which I entered at my birth, parts of which I have deliberately adopted,—it is not a great assumption to say, In this order I ought to abide; its influences, like those of Pleasure and Pain, are invisible, but they are just as real. And if they come into conflict, as we know that they do

Nature and human order.

continually, my obligation to the one may be an obligation to resist the other.

Practical view of this order.

Obligation to an Order or a Constitution may not sound very practical language. Translate it as quickly as you please into obligation to fathers and mothers, to brothers and sisters, to a wife, to your Queen and country. Change as soon as you will the long word Obligation into the shorter homelier word Duty. I shall never object to such alterations; the mother tongue is always sweeter, often more distinct and definite, than the tongue of philosophers. But happily when we speak of persons we cannot forget the affections which we have for them. How precious these are, how closely they are intertwined with the roots of our social existence, I hope to shew you when we come in a future Course of Lectures—that on Moral Philosophy—to speak of the Family and the Nation. But there is a danger of treating those affections as if they created the Order which calls for them. If we fall into that mistake, the affection will become merely a part of our pleasures or pains. As long as we like a person we shall suppose we are bound to him; our dislike will dissolve the tie. We shall live in a circle of what are called in the cant of our day *elective affinities;* the grand old name of Relations will be treated as obsolete. That you may escape this danger, I dwell upon this fact—that we are in an order; that relations abide whether we are faithful to them or neglect them; and that the Conscience in each of us affirms 'I am in this order, I ought to act 'consistently with it, let my fancies say what they 'please.' The necessity for such firm and distinct language becomes more evident to us the older we grow and the more we notice the habits and doctrines which

Affections correspond to it; do not create it.

Elective affinities and Relations.

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Peril of Relations.

are prevalent amongst us. The reverence for parents, the sanctity of the marriage vow, the permanence of friendships, are all in peril from the confusion between likings and affections. Those who resolutely draw a distinction between them will have their reward. They will find that the conscience protests not against the fervency, but against the coldness, feebleness, uncertainty of our affections.

The greatest number.

There is another point, closely connected with this subject of Duty or Obligation, which is suggested by the passage that I read to you last week from Mr Bentham's Treatise on Morals and Legislation. He sets before himself the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people as the object which individuals and governments are to seek. I have said already that I believe he did seek after that object; when I speak hereafter of the ideals which have had an influence in raising men's thoughts above narrow and partial interests, I shall hope to do justice to that ideal. Here, as I have told you, my business is not with ideals, but with the questions, What am I? what has this word 'ought' to do with me? These questions can never be answered whilst we are busy about numbers, whilst we are losing ourselves in a crowd. Mr Bentham was aware of this fact himself. He says, you may remember, "It is in vain to talk of the interest of the Com-"munity without understanding what is the interest of "the individual." A little while afterwards he discusses an objection. Mr Bain says of Dr Whewell's doctrine of the Conscience, that it makes a man a judge in his own case. Mr Bentham foresees that his doctrine is open to the same complaint. "It may be said every "one will be constituting himself judge of this utility;

Each and all.

Principles of Morals and Legislation, c. II. *Works*, *Vol.* I. *p.* 12.

"every obligation will cease when he no longer per-
"ceives that it is his own interest." He replies, with his usual promptness and decision, "Every one will
"constitute himself judge of his own utility; this is,
"and this ought to be, otherwise man would not be a
"reasonable being. He who is not a judge of what is
"reasonable for himself is less than an infant, is a fool.
"The obligation which binds men to their engagements
"is nothing but a feeling of an interest of a superior
"class, which outweighs an inferior interest. Men are
"not always held by the particular utility of a par-
"ticular engagement, but in the case in which the en-
"gagement becomes burthensome to one of the parties,
"it is still upheld by the general utility of engage-
"ments, by the confidence which each enlightened man
"wishes to have placed in his word, that he may be
"considered as trustworthy, and enjoy the advantages
"attached to probity and esteem."

Every man his own judge of what is useful and mischievous.

Grounds of honesty.

How we are tossed back in these sentences, from the Community to the individual, from the individual to the Community! "It is vain to speak of the interest "of the Community without understanding the interest "of the individual." "He who is not a judge of what "is reasonable for himself is a fool." And yet the reason which a man has for being faithful to his engagements is, that he wishes to have faith placed in his word (of course by the Community to which he belongs), that he wishes to be considered (of course by that Community) as trustworthy, and enjoy the advantages attached (of course by that Community) to probity and esteem.

Evasions and ambiguities in these statements.

One is absolutely sure that these motives did not govern Mr Bentham. He wished to speak true words,

They do not imply any dis-

LECT. III.

honest intention.

not to have credit for speaking them; not to be considered trustworthy, but to be trustworthy; not to have the votes of men on his side, but to deserve them, and to maintain his cause without them, if they were all against him. But this bewildered language in a writer who especially desired to be precise—this suggestion of insincerity in one who continually denounced insincerity in his neighbours, and certainly strove to be clear of it in his own acts—is inevitable, it seems to me, if the solemn 'I ought' and 'I ought not' of the Conscience is explained away as the result of some external influence.

I should not do justice to that mode of accounting for its operations, if I confined myself to Mr Bentham. Since his time Mr Bain has elaborated the same doctrine more completely, and in language far more august and imposing. There are several passages on the subject in his work on the Emotions and the Will. I quote the one in which he has summed up his decisions.

Resolution of the Conscience into the fear of punishment.

"I have given it," he says, "as my deliberate opi-
"nion that authority or punishment is the commence-
"ment of that state of mind recognised under the va-
"rious names Conscience, the Moral Sense, the Senti-
"ment of Obligation. The major part of every Com-
"munity adopt certain rules of conduct necessary for
"the common preservation or ministering to the com-
"mon well-being. They find it not merely their in-
"terest, but the very condition of their existence, to
"observe a number of maxims of individual restraint
"and of respect to one another's feelings on such points
"as person, property, and good name. Obedience must
"be spontaneous on the part of the larger number, or
"on those whose influence preponderates in the Society;

The Society—its subjective

"as regards the rest, compulsion must be brought to "bear. Every one, not of himself disposed to follow "the rules prescribed by the Community, is subjected "to some infliction of pain to supply the absence of "other motives; the infliction increasing in severity "until obedience is obtained. It is the familiarity with "this *régime* of compulsion and of suffering, constantly "increasing until resistance is overborne, that plants in "the infant and youthful mind the first germs of the "sense of obligation. I know of no fact that would "prove the existence of any such sentiment in the pri- "mitive cast of our mental constitution. An artificial "system of controlling the actions is contrived, adapted "to our volitional nature, the system of using pain to "deter from particular sorts of conduct. A strong line "of distinction is drawn in every human mind between "actions that bring no pain, except what arise out of "themselves, as when we encounter a bitter taste or a "scalding touch, and those actions that are accompanied "with pains imposed by persons about us. These ac- "tions, and the circumstances attending them, make a "deep and characteristic impression; we have a peculiar "notion attaching to them, and to the individual per- "sons the authors of the attendant pains. A strong "ideal avoidance, not unmixed perhaps with the per- "turbation of fear, is generated towards what is thus "forbidden by penalties rising with transgression. The "feeling drawn out towards those that administer the "pain is also of the nature of dread; we term it usually "the feeling of authority. From first to last this is the "essential and defining quality of the Conscience, al- "though mixed up with other ingredients. As Duty is "circumscribed by punishment, so the sense of obliga-

fractory members.

Treatment of the refractory.

Ideal avoidance.

Authority and Dread.

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Education.

How the flogged become floggers.

The sentiment of the forbidden.

The subordinate motives.

"tion has no other universal property, except the ideal "and actual avoidance of conduct prohibited by penal- "ties. This discipline indoctrinates the newly intro- "duced member of Society with the sentiment of the "*forbidden*, which by and bye takes root and expands "into the sentiment of *moral disapprobation*; he then "joins with the other members of the Community in "imposing and enforcing the prohibitions that have "been stamped and branded in the course of his own "education. Duty then may be said to have two prime "supports in the more self-regarding parts of our na- "ture—the sense of the common preservation and well- "being operating upon a preponderating majority, and "the sense of punishment brought to bear upon indi- "viduals (who must be the smaller number) not suffi- "ciently prompted by the other sentiment. Order "being once established in a Society, that is to say, the "practice of obedience being habitual to the mass of "the Community, it is only necessary to apply a dis- "ciplining process to the young to prepare them for "the same acquiescence in the public morality. The "imposition of penalties begets at once the sense and "avoidance of the *forbidden* and the awe of authority, "and this, as a general rule, is retained through life as "the basis of the individual Conscience, the foremost "motive to abstain from actions designated as wrong.

"It is not implied" (he goes on) "that Conscience "is never anything else than the actual and ideal "avoidance and dread of punishment. Other elements "concur sometimes so largely as to obliterate in the "view the primary germ and characteristic type of "the faculty. There are motives that supersede the "operation of punishment in a variety of instances;

"as when we contract a positive sentiment of good will "towards those whom the law forbids us to injure. "Even then we do not lose the strong feeling implanted "in us respecting the forbidden and the authoritative; "we simply are no longer in the position of being moved "by that alone. Our tender feelings, our sentiments "of the fair, the equal, and the consistent, if liberally "developed and well directed, impel us, as it were of "our own accord, to respect those interests of our "fellow-beings that are protected by the enactments "of Society. Moreover, as already said, there is a "certain maturity of the well-disposed mind at which "we enter the company of the majority, spontaneous "in its own obedience from a recognition of the common "safety, and compelling the dissentient minorities by "force or punishment. At this stage the Conscience, "which was at first derived or implanted, is now in- "dependent or self-sustaining. The judgment of the "individual approves of the common prohibitions against "falsehood, injustice, breach of bargains, and other "injuries, as prohibitions essential to its own security, "in company with the rest of the Society, and Con- "science therefore passes into a higher grade of the "prudential motive." *Emotions and Will*, 2nd Edition, pp. 481—483.

Entering the company of the Majority.

The perfected man.

Here the Community stands forth in its full grandeur. Mr Bentham is in general much more direct and straightforward than his successor. Throwing off philosophical conventionalities, he can talk in plain English of a man being a fool. But he falls into vagueness and contradiction because he cannot give up the claims of the individual to be heard; he puts those claims higher than any one who recognises a Conscience

Comparison of the two writers.

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The function of the community according to Mr Bain's theory.

would dare to put them. Mr Bain is free from any such perplexity. The work of the community is deliberately to coerce the individual by punishment (which Mr Bain identifies with authority), till in the maturity of a well-disposed mind he enters into the company of the majority. Mr Bain has therefore not the slightest objection to a Conscience. So far from disliking it, he values the Conscience as that in each man which leads him to tremble at the decrees of a majority. It has nothing to do indeed with 'the primitive cast of our mental constitution.' But by cultivating 'a strong ideal avoidance' 'of the pains imposed by the persons about us, not unaccompanied perhaps with the perturbation of fear,' the 'newly introduced member of society is indoctrinated with the sentiment of the *forbidden*.' And thus having his own Conscience properly corrected and shaped under this discipline, 'he joins with the other members of the community in imposing and enforcing the prohibitions that have been stamped and branded in his own education.' My excuse for repeating expressions which I have just read to you is that I fear you should lose them in the multitude of eloquent phrases by which they are encompassed, and that, as they are exactly opposed to what I have been saying respecting the Conscience, you ought to have the opportunity of carefully weighing them.

The Conscience its creature.

You will judge from what I have said already that I am not at all anxious to debate the question whether the Conscience belongs to the primitive cast of our mental Constitution. Some—probably Mr Bain—would seek for that primitive cast among savages. I have contended that the words 'I' and 'ought' do not be-

long to the vocabulary of savages as they belong to the vocabulary of civilized men. Again, no one I suppose would dispute the assertion that the parent or teacher of a child exercises an authority over it which is external to it. Nor should I, or any one I know, say that punishment is not one of the instruments of this authority, or that it may not be used for the purpose of awakening or cultivating the Conscience. That the community of which a parent or a teacher is a member is deeply concerned in the question, *how* he exercises this authority, *how* and to what end he wields this punishment, is a belief which I think we should all entertain, even if it had not received Mr Bain's imprimatur. But in that 'how' and 'to what end' lies a tremendous controversy. The distinction of the civilized man from the savage is, as it seems to me, that he is not to the same extent the victim of external influences, that he rises above them and tries to rule them. The external authority of the parent or teacher I maintain is useless unless he appeals to that which is within the child, is mischievous unless it is exerted to call that forth. The external authority must become an internal authority, not co-operating with the forces which are seeking to crush the I in the child but working against those forces, working to deliver the child from their dominion. The punishments therefore which are the weapons of this authority but never can be confounded with it, must be directed expressly to *this* purpose. If the child stoops, as it will stoop continually, to the attraction of outward things which it has been forbidden to touch or taste because they will do it harm, punishments will remind it that to obey its teachers is better than to obey its inclinations.

Is the purpose of Education to enslave or to emancipate?

The external and internal authority.

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The teacher will endeavour so to contrive his punishment that 'the sentiment of the forbidden' may always be accompanied with the sentiment of trust in the person who has forbidden. If the child is taught to have a dread of him as one who is an inflicter of pain, not to have a reverence for him as one who cares for it and is seeking to save it from its own folly—if the child is instructed carefully to separate the pain which rises out of its own acts from the pain which the parent inflicts so that it may associate the pain with him rather than with them—then all has been done which human art can do to make it grow up a contemptible coward, crouching to every majority which threatens it with the punishments that it has learnt to regard as the greatest and only evils; one who may at last, 'in the maturity of a well-disposed mind,' become the spontaneous agent of a majority in trampling out in others the freedom which has been so assiduously trampled out in itself. A parent or a teacher who pursues this object is of all the ministers of a community the one whom it should regard with the greatest abhorrence, seeing that he is bringing up for it, not citizens, but slaves.

The notion of a public Conscience.

I do not deny that Mr Bain can appeal on behalf of his view of Society and Education to a number of precedents in past days—to a vast body of opinion in our own. If it were not so I should not care to speak of his theories; for theories go for very little, except so far as they condense and formulise the tempers and habits which shape the talk of drawing-rooms, the debates in parliament, the lessons in primers and story-books, the transactions in counting-houses and shops. There has been a disposition in many—from very dif-

ferent even opposite motives—to say that our soldiers and sailors must be drilled according to the maxims of Mr Bain's education that they may have a merely public Conscience. "What would become of us," it has been asked, "if each of them felt himself to be an I; said for himself, 'I ought and I ought not'?" My answer is this, I know not what would have become of us in any great crisis if this personal feeling had *not* been awakened; if every man had not felt that *he* was expected to do his duty; if duty *had* been understood by each sailor or soldier in Mr Bain's sense as the dread of punishment; if the captain who asked for obedience had been just the person towards whom that slavish dread was most directed. Unless the obedience of our sailors and soldiers had been diametrically the reverse of that sentiment which Mr Bain describes, I believe there is not a regiment which would not have turned its back in the day of battle, not a ship which would not have struck its flag. The charm of the captain's eye and voice, of his example and his sympathy, this, as all witnesses whose testimony is worth anything have declared, has had an electrical influence upon hosts which could enable them to face punishments from enemies considerably more terrible than any which the most savage vengeance could devise for desertion. It is not the thought of what a majority will say or do that can stir any individual man to stand where he is put and die. It is that he has been aroused to the conviction, 'I am here, and here I ought to be.'

soldiers and sailors?

The test of facts.

That is not sentiment but plain sense; an adherence to facts known and confessed, a refusal to exchange facts for grand and empty generalisations. There are indeed cases, extreme cases, Mr Bain admits, when

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Case of the Birkenhead.

'Conscience passes into a high grade of the prudential motive.' Let us look at one of these extreme cases. A set of soldiers, rough men of the ordinary English type, are off the Cape on board the ship *Birkenhead*. I shall spoil the story. The Professor of Poetry in the sister University shall tell it for me.

Poems of Sir F. Doyle. The 'higher grade of the prudential motive' illustrated.

Right on our flank the crimson sun went down,
The deep sea rolled around in dark repose,
When, like the wild shriek from some captured town,
A cry of women rose.

The stout ship Birkenhead lay hard and fast,
Caught, without hope, upon a hidden rock;
Her timbers thrilled as nerves, when thro' them passed
The spirit of that shock.

And ever like base cowards, who leave their ranks
In danger's hour, before the rush of steel,
Drifted away, disorderly, the planks,
From underneath her keel.

Confusion spread, for, though the coast seemed near,
Sharks hovered thick along that white sea-brink.
The boats could hold?—not all—and it was clear
She was about to sink.

"Out with those boats, and let us haste away,"
Cried one, "ere yet yon sea the bark devours."
The man thus clamouring was, I scarce need say,
No officer of ours.

We knew our duty better than to care
For such loose babblers, and made no reply,
Till our good colonel gave the word, and there
Formed us in line to die.

There rose no murmur from the ranks, no thought,
By shameful strength, unhonoured life to seek;
Our post to quit we were not trained, nor taught
To trample down the weak.

So we made women with their children go,
The oars ply back agen, and yet agen;
Whilst, inch by inch, the drowning ship sank low,
Still under steadfast men.

What follows why recall? The brave who died,
Died without flinching in the bloody surf;
They sleep as well, beneath that purple tide,
As others, under turf.

I need not tell you that these soldiers as little dreamed of doing a great or meritorious act as of escaping punishment. They simply did what they ought to do. Their business was to go to the bottom, and they went.

Anticipation of Mr Bain's doctrine in the practice of Inquisitors.

I have spoken of our own times, for they concern us most. But I said, Mr Bain had also precedents of other days in his favour. Inquisitors and persecutors of all ages have attempted in different ways to act upon his maxim. They have thoroughly understood that identification of authority with punishment, which he perhaps has been the first openly and in terms to proclaim. By punishment to bring a reluctant minority into conformity with the will of a majority has been their expressed and deliberate purpose. To cultivate a Conscience in the young which should begin with a dread of transgressing the decrees of the majority, which should at last acquiesce in them naturally and enforce them upon other men, has been the aim of their policy. And having had great and wonderful success in putting down recusants by force, and in reducing nations to servility, they have looked forward with a certain dim anticipation to a period when the higher grade of the prudential motive shall be attained, when no man who has thoughts unlike

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those of the majority shall utter them, when very few indeed will have any thoughts to utter.

These inquisitors and persecutors of old times, Mr Bain will tell us, appealed to 'an abstract, unseen, unproducible power;' he acknowledges no such power. He would do himself great injustice in saying so. No power that I ever heard of is so 'abstract, unseen, unproducible' as the Society which is put forth to terrify and crush each man who dares to claim a distinct existence. Where is it, what is it, who brought it forth? Parents, Schoolmasters, Legislators, are its agents. It remains full of ghostly dread, gathering into itself all that is most tremendous in the phantoms which we boast that modern enlightenment has driven from our nurseries. When Mr Bentham speaks of a Community he says that 'it is a fictitious body composed of the individuals who are *considered* as constituting *as it were* its members.' A man who abhorred fictions and figures of speech falls into these strange expressions, because he cannot quite divest himself of the old belief that a community is a body, real and not fictitious, consisting of individuals who are its actual members. There is in his phraseology the after-glow of a sun which has set. No such parting radiance disturbs the heaven of Mr Bain. He is haunted by no old recollections of a body and its members. Whether the Community be fictitious or real signifies little to him. It serves equally, in either character, to extinguish the individual.

Society the most frightful of bugbears.

And therefore it may be quite necessary, in order to avoid the terror of these 'abstract, unproducible powers,' that we should face the question whether the Conscience bears witness of any actual living super-

The Dæmonology of modern Philosophers.

human power to which it owes homage. Do not start at the word 'superhuman,' as if I were bringing it forth out of some cavern of divinity. Butler, we have seen, did his utmost to confine the Conscience within the limits of human nature. The experiment was an interesting one, most ably conducted. But it involved him in evident perplexities. It laid him open to the charge pressed by Mr Bain against Dr Whewell, who tried to present Butler's statements in a modified form, that he either invented an ideal Conscience, or made every man a judge in his own case. Mr Bentham escapes that danger by erecting Pleasure and Pain into two *superhuman* powers, to which man must needs be in subjection; they themselves, it would appear, paying a feudal homage to another Power called Nature—obviously not *Human* Nature in Butler's sense, but a very awful, mysterious, 'unproducible' deity. Equally *superhuman* is that Society which creates a Conscience by the infliction of punishments, the remembrance and expectation of which keeps its subjects in habitual prostration. Such opinions, which are specially the opinions of our day, leave one who is discussing the question of the Conscience no choice. He is hemmed in by superhuman influences of *some* kind. If those which great philosophers bid us tremble at appear to him of a very oppressive kind, ministering to weakness, to superstition, to slavery, he must ask if there is no other which may be stronger than these, which may be a deliverer from them?

Some superhuman power the confessed master of

Though in this course of Lectures I may do little more than raise that question, I must observe here that it could never less be evaded than in this England of the 19th century. The superhuman is not banished,

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the Conscience; what Power?

as we have seen, from the speculations of its most approved sages; it is certainly not banished from the entertainments of its most refined and most sceptical triflers. That which is not allowed a place in our inmost conviction will float about us in phantastic shapes, which we dare not ask whether they bring with them airs from Heaven or blasts from Hell. The Conscience will make cowards of us all, if it does not lead us to the source of courage.

LECTURE IV.

CASES OF CONSCIENCE.

How Casuistry begins.

I HAVE found myself already in conflict with two eminent philosophers of this century on the subject of the Conscience. I should not have plunged into such disputes if they had only concerned certain Moral Systems. But the assertion of Mr Bentham that Pleasure and Pain are the Sovereigns of mankind, the doctrine of Mr Bain that the Conscience is to be trained by punishment till it bows before the decrees of a majority, involve questions which affect every act of our lives. A number of those cases of Conscience with which the Casuist professes to deal, and which, whether he deals with them or not, perplex our conduct and distract our thoughts, take their rise in the demands: Ought I or ought I not to obey the commands of this Pleasure or this Pain, or of this Nature which appears to be their Mistress? Ought I or ought I not to obey the commands of this Society, this Majority, which is able to enforce its decrees by terrible penalties, and which has various bribes for bringing me into sympathy with it? I cannot, as I said last week, avoid entering on a third enquiry, Ought I or ought I not to perform certain services, to offer certain sacrifices, at the bidding of some

What kind of cases the Casuist must deal with.

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invisible divinity? I might comprehend this enquiry in the other two, for Pleasure and Pain, Nature and Society, as Mr Bentham and Mr Bain set them forth to us, *are* invisible powers, whatever visible forms they may assume. Still we shall find that for practical purposes it is convenient to speak of Cases of Conscience under each of these three heads.

I. Those which turn on the words Pleasure, Pain, Nature.

I. I begin with those which concern Pleasure and Pain. Mr Bentham appears to have thought that there are but two ways in which this subject can be contemplated. He himself, the champion of the principle of *Utility*, maintains that it behoves us to seek the greatest amount of pleasure which it is possible for us, being such creatures as we are, to enjoy, the least amount of pain which, being such creatures as we are, it is possible for us to suffer. Another set of men are champions of what he calls the principle of *Asceticism*. These, he says, 'approve of actions so far as they tend 'to *diminish* the happiness of the persons whose inter-'est is in question, disapprove of actions so far as they 'tend to augment it.' Whether there are any persons who would acknowledge this to be a fair statement of their objects, I greatly doubt; most will say that the description is an ugly caricature, not a faithful portrait. But since there are two or three kinds of Asceticism, which may present themselves to us in our own experience, and may give rise to cases of Conscience, I shall avail myself of Mr Bentham's word for the sake of enquiring what it means, and how it may concern us.

Utility and Asceticism.

1st Form of Asceticism.

(1) Mr Bentham's specimens of the Ascetic are the Stoic of the old world and the Monk of Christendom: men of both these classes, he says, have dis-

Pleasures

approved of pleasure as such, and have approved of pain as such. Now there is a sense, as I have observed already, in which Mr Bentham himself was an Ascetic as much as any Stoic or any Monk. Pleasures offered themselves to him, and he deliberately chose pains in preference to them. He may have posted his books carefully — may have calculated accurately that he should have so much more pleasure on the whole, if he endured some immediate trouble and annoyance: he may even have thought that he secured some pleasure at the moment which, either from the quality of it, or from the intensity of it, outweighed the pain of that moment. All this is possible; but whatever the previous processes that went on in him were, when the pleasure actually stood before him inviting him to partake of it, he must have assumed the position of an Ascetic. Do not forget this. The reasons of his conduct may have been of one kind or another; his actual conduct was that of a man who would be stigmatised by the habitual followers of pleasure as an Ascetic. For an Ascetic, to all intents and purposes, every man must be who has a work to do, and who determines that it shall be done, let the inducements to abandon it or neglect it be what they may.

abandoned, pain accepted for the sake of work.

Asceticism of Mr Bentham.

Take another instance from a man who will not generally be suspected of an over amount of conscientiousness. Napoleon the first, when about 15 years of age, was in the military school at Paris. He complained to the superintendents of the school about its arrangements. What do you suppose were his objections to them? He said the fare of himself and his brother scholars was too luxurious. It could not prepare them for living in poor households, still less for

Asceticism of Napoleon.

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the hardships of the camp. He urged that instead of having two courses a day they should have ammunition bread and soldiers' rations, and that they should be compelled to mend and clean their own stockings and shoes. Here you have a young Ascetic; so assuredly he would have been considered at the school; so he was. He chose what was painful in preference to what was pleasant. And because he did so, he was able hereafter to trample upon those peoples and monarchs who accounted pleasure the end of life, whose greatest desire was to avoid pain. No Alpine snows, no armed men could withstand him. Only when he encountered men who had learnt, as he had learnt, to claim dominion over circumstances, to endure suffering for the sake of a higher end, could that strength, which he had won through his Asceticism, be broken.

The fruits of it in his case.

2nd Form of Asceticism.

(2) Napoleon was no theorist; he hated theories. He wanted to be independent of his own inclinations that he might exercise power over other men. The Stoical *theory* was deduced from an observation how much power a man possesses who is not the victim of pleasures or of pains. The endurance of pain, the contempt of it, seemed to the Stoic the signs of a man. He exaggerated the notion, till pain itself acquired a glory in his eyes, till he thought himself grand for hating pleasure. Such pride involved contradiction. Pleasure was not his master, what was? To be simply his own master, to be alone in the world, was a poor result of his victory. Men might say with great reason, 'It is better to eat, drink, and be merry, than merely 'to dwell in this magnificent self-sufficiency.' The Asceticism of the Monk had a different ground. It was associated with the belief that the best man is he who

Pain becoming elevated into a good.

The Stoic.

The Monk.

can bear pain for his fellows. But it often passed, like the Stoical doctrine, into a notion that pain had some virtue or excellence of its own. Out of this arose a greater contradiction than in the former case. He who was to be a sacrifice for others began to think how much glory his pain could bring to him.

3rd Form of Asceticism.

(3) This is the second form of Asceticism; that form under which it presented itself to Mr Bentham as the direct antagonist of his principle of Utility. There is a third form which is, as it seems to me, not opposed to that principle, but a developement of it. A man believes that by enduring pain he may save himself from pain in a future state, may even perhaps obtain pleasure in a future state. He calculates, as Mr Bentham would teach him to calculate, how he may secure the least amount of pain, the greatest amount of pleasure, possible. His calculation may take in elements which Mr Bentham would exclude; their fundamental axiom is the same.

The calculations of the Utilitarian associated with immortality.

Cases under the first head.

(*a*) In each of us there will arise cases of conscience into which one or another or all three of these ascetical notions may enter. Every one has some work to do. Every one has inducements to forsake that work for things which, whether pleasant to others or not, are pleasant to him, which no sophistry can persuade him are not pleasant. Mr Bentham's assumption that what is pleasant is natural, that Nature has appointed it for us, commends itself to his judgment. Only there is something in him which says I ought not. The agreeable thing will hinder me from doing the thing which I am occupied with. The agreeable thing accepted to-day will make me weaker to-morrow, less capable of determining my course, more the victim of

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the impulses and impressions that come to me from without.

Some men get rid of this troublesome remonstrance easily; 'I like it' drives away 'I ought not' speedily. Some at once, as Napoleon, take the ascetical course. They have a distinct object before them, nothing shall tempt them to forget it. A great number, perhaps the greatest number of men, touch neither of these extremes. They hover between Nature and Conscience. They cannot silence the 'ought not.' But they ask themselves *why* they should pay heed to it, *why* they should not take this or that pleasure which it seems to prohibit, undergo this or that painful effort which it seems to enjoin? 'What is this restraining, tormenting 'voice? From what cavern does it issue? Do I clearly 'catch its messages? Are they indeed saying, Avoid 'this and this? Do this and this?' Here begin cases of Conscience. The man consults himself or consults some friend or some professional Casuist about these points. 'May I indulge my own taste or fancy? If 'not, why not? If it is not bad for that man, why is it 'for me?' What answers the Casuist may make to these enquiries I am not now considering. I am only tracing the cases which come before him to their sources, and showing you that they are not imaginary, but such as enter into the transactions of every day, and are mingled with the threads of each man's existence. One remark I would make in reference to them here. You may have thought me pedantical or fanciful for insisting that the Conscience should be contemplated in each particular man, that it should never be treated as something general or belonging to a number of men. But when these cases present themselves to

Struggle between 'I like' and 'I ought not.'

The former highly argumentative.

us, the danger of departing from that maxim becomes apparent, even if adherence to it is troublesome. The habit of measuring ourselves by others is one into which we slide most easily, and which involves continual unfairness to them, still greater to ourselves. I ask why I may not indulge in extravagances in which a man of twice or thrice my means indulges freely; why I may not eat or drink what a man with twice or thrice my strength or my labour perhaps needs. I cling therefore to the '*I* ought' and the '*I* ought not;' that will not interfere with the discovery and acknowledgement of laws by which we are all bound; it will prevent me from assuming the practice of this man or that as the standard of mine, or my practice as the standard of his.

Mischief from changing the singular pronoun into the plural.

(*b*) The first form of Asceticism, that which Mr Bentham and Napoleon practised, may then be very needful for you and me; we may not be safe if we discard it. Shall I tell you how we become involved in the second? in that kind of Asceticism I mean which treats pain as a positive good, pleasure as a positive evil? We do not drop into Stoicism naturally. A few may have some bias to it from education; in general when it is enforced in childhood there is a reaction against it in later years. A few may be drawn into it by the arguments or the example of others; more attractive arguments and examples will probably in a little time break the force of those; the Stoic may soon be turned into an Epicurean. The doctrine is much more commonly embraced by one who has for a long time acted on the maxim that pleasure is the supreme power which he must obey. He has had some stern and clear intimations of the effects which come from subjection to this ruler. A violent quarrel

Generation of the Stoical Asceticism.

Savage temper of the recent

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convert from Epicurism.

with himself is the consequence; with himself or with the tendencies to which he has passively yielded. He gnashes his teeth at the things which have been the occasion of his distress and humiliation; he calls them by hard names; he denounces pleasure as pleasure; he greedily seizes upon pain as if by enduring it he could take some revenge upon himself for that avoidance of it in times past which now seems to him feeble and cowardly. Cases of Conscience involving this kind of Asceticism are very numerous. The symptoms which they disclose are hard for the patient himself to deal with; they may be much aggravated by the prescriptions of quacks. Mere abusive epithets, such as Mr Bentham indulges in, or the solemn announcement that we ought to seek the greatest amount of pleasure and the least amount of pain possible, will not touch even the surface of such cases.

Not diminished by contempt.

The third class of Cases.

(*c*) Still more embarrassing are those cases into which the third notion of Asceticism enters. Suppose a man rich and comfortable, who has never for a moment dreamed that there could be any maxim of life but that which Mr Bentham enunciates, who has habitually sought as much pleasure as he could get and avoided pain of every kind,—Or suppose an Irish labourer with dilapidated trousers and straw peeping through his hat, who yet to the extent of his means has wooed pleasure at wakes and fairs, sometimes inflicting a little pain with a shillelagh as a way of diversifying the pleasure. Either of these awakens on a certain day to the feeling that there is something which he ought to have done, or ought not to have done. The past which he seemed to have left far behind him comes strangely back to him. His yester-

The spectre of a past life rising before a man.

days claim to be part of him as much as the present moment: they may continue to put forth that claim for ages. He may *never* be able to shake them off. That would be dreadful. How can he banish the apparition? What can he do that it may not give him much more pain, and greater pain, than it is giving him now? Some one is tormenting him; seems to like tormenting him. Could he not make terms with the enemy? Could he not agree to suffer something now that he may have less weight of suffering hereafter? Could he not find, or could not some one find for him, a scheme of arrangements, compromises, compensations, by which he might be excused from part of the punishment which he dreads, and might also retain a certain tolerable share of the present pleasure which he is loath to part with? How many cases have occurred, and are occurring every day, of this kind, no words can tell; or what schemes of Casuistry have been devised to meet them. The precepts of Mr Bentham, diffused ever so widely, embraced ever so cordially, can have no effect in settling them. For as I said before, his precepts have to all intents and purposes been adopted already by these troubled spirits. They are turning to the religious Casuist for help, because their Utilitarian adviser has failed to take account of a disturbing force in them which makes his medicines ineffectual. 'You can of course call me an Ascetic 'if I resort to plans plausibly and skilfully devised 'for supplying the defect in your system: for avoid-'ing a pain which I actually feel, and which, upon 'your own showing, I ought to account the great and 'only evil, for obtaining as much pleasure as I can 'under the conditions in which I find myself. Some

How can he lay it?

The superstition consequent on such experiments cannot be encountered by the Utilitarian.

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'may call my calculations ignominious; you cannot. I 'learnt the need of them in your school.'

II. Social Tyranny.

II. I pass to that class of Cases which has reference to Society. Whether the Education which Mr Bain speaks of—the education which shapes each man's wishes, purposes, convictions, according to the wishes, purposes, convictions of a majority—is desirable or not, there can be no question that such an education exists, that it is working very extensively and with great power. The philosopher has here also generalised from the practice which he sees around him; his doctrine is certain to meet with favour for precisely the same reason which secures favour to Mr Bentham's doctrine respecting Pleasure and Pain; it represents accurately what a number of men in various quarters are actually doing or striving to do.

Popularity of Mr Bain's notions on this subject.

To appreciate their work or their endeavour we must recollect that the grand word *Society* or *Community* really represents a number of different Societies or Communities, each of which is acting upon a certain number of individuals. For instance, in every trade there is a community aiming to train the notions of those who belong to it in accordance with the notions which it has inherited or which it has adopted. The Conscience of the individual who engages in the trade is formed, Mr Bain would say, by the majority of those who have entered into it already; punishments, such as exclusion from the intercourse or sympathy of his fellows, make him feel the great inconvenience of adopting any maxims or practices unlike those of the majority. The younger members by degrees rise to their share of government and enforce the same rules upon their pupils and successors. A great number

Example from Trade Maxims.

How they become 'branded' into the young.

attain that 'high grade of the prudential motive,' at which conformity becomes no longer a difficult effort, the result of terror at a rod continually suspended over them, but means the ready submission to a rule which they feel to be convenient, and which they have the pleasure of making others feel to be inevitable. All that is, no doubt, true. Mr Bain himself allows for occasional exceptions; a few men like to be independent, to choose a way of their own. He does not deny that there is a certain amount of benefit to be derived from these anomalous individuals. He does not encourage their growth; all the processes of his discipline tend to discourage it. But if they start up in spite of the discipline they may perhaps be turned to some account. However dangerous, an optimist will hope that their existence may at last turn to the benefit, not the mischief, of the Community.

The occasional preference for individual opinion.

Now when I speak of Cases of Conscience in respect to Society, I mean this; that every man whatsoever who has been brought under this kind of discipline not only feels tempted to rebel against it, for the reason which Mr Bain supposes,—because it thwarts his inclination, because it restrains some of his enjoyments,—but for another very different reason; because it prescribes acts to him which, though they are agreeable to him, though the punishment for not doing them is very severe, yet something tells him that he ought not to do. I say that there are moments when such qualms come over every one; and further that those individual men in whom they become most strong are not those who find their luxury in arrogant independence, but are those who have the liveliest sense of their obligations to their fellowmen, the greatest desire

The continual protest of the Conscience in each man,

a protest for Law not for Independence.

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that the laws of the Nation to which they belong may be not violated, but maintained.

Consider that instance of trades to which I referred just now. A man finds a custom established in the trade to which he has been bred, the trade by which he is to get his living, which directly interferes with the observance of a contract recognised by the law of the land between the tradesman and his customers, at all events interferes with what he knows to be the understanding of the customer when the article is bought. There is the smallest possible fear of his ever coming within the reach of the law; there are a hundred ways of evading that, a hundred reasons why any person who discovers himself to be injured, if he does discover it, may not wish to trouble himself with a lawsuit. The reputation he might get with the customer, if he knew —which is unlikely—that a maxim of the trade had been broken through in his favour, would not be the weight of a feather against the loss of credit and caste with those who surround him. Those for whom he has most respect—men much better than he counts himself—have gone on in these practices for years; they will be grieved if he adopts any other. It will seem to them, it seems to himself, a pharisaical exaltation of his own opinion against theirs. And yet the voice in him says, I ought not to do it. Here is a case of Conscience. A whole world of Casuistry rises out of that struggle between the opinion of the majority and the 'I ought not' of the single man. But the 'I ought 'not' is not working against an Order, but with an Order. It is protesting against a disorder, which however long it has been sanctioned, however many votes concur in the support of it, is a disorder still, and

The fear of punishment not on the side of Law but of the social Tradition.

Order and Tradition; which is to conquer?

will prove itself to be so more and more, the longer it exists.

I dwell upon this instance of Contracts which have reference to Property, because we are told again and again that these depend for their security simply upon the punishments which enforce the observance of them, or upon the opinion of their usefulness which those punishments create, or upon a general experience of the disadvantages arising from the violation of them. No country furnishes so good a test of this principle as the England of the present day. We are a commercial people. Punishments have been especially devised to support the fidelity of pecuniary engagements. They have been suggested by mercantile men. They have passed under the revision of lawyers. They have been accepted by parliaments. They have been enforced by the strongest public opinion. Seldom is there much compassion felt for a fraudulent debtor; still less for one who has been a trustee of others' money and has converted it to his own purposes. The newspaper press strengthens and supports the severest judgment of onlookers and sufferers. It would seem as if commercial crimes in this country were prohibited by every motive which could act upon reasonable beings. And yet which of us has not heard complaints that they are on the increase? And which of us has not heard those who dwell most on the force of punishments and of public opinion—who laugh the bitterest laugh when a moralist speaks of any other—yet appealing in despair to the conscience of individuals, trying whether they cannot arouse that to sustain the weakness of the power which, according to their theory, should be invincible? To be sure when they explain themselves

Securities for commercial virtue in English Society.

Are they effectual?

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The believer in the might of opinion begging help from the Conscience.

they affirm that it is Opinion which gives effect to Conscience, that all they want is to create an Opinion against certain acts that are mischievous to Society. Wearisome and endless see-saw! From Opinion to Conscience; from Conscience to Opinion. You want Opinion to produce the effects of Conscience; the Conscience must itself create the Opinion. Oh learn to bear the scorn of the philosophers who talk to you in this fashion! The scorn is not for you, but for themselves. There is a Conscience in each of them, whether he owns it or not. Give him credit for it; appeal to it; let him keep his theory along with it, if he likes, and if he can.

The principle illustrated in Trades applicable to all Professions.

The cases which arise in the Conscience of a Tradesman or Merchant, and which often set him at variance with the customs and maxims of his class, are not more numerous than those which occur in the Conscience of the Lawyer, the Physician, the Clergyman. A man asks himself if he ought to do this, if he ought not to do that. Why? That he may have a way of his own? No! precisely because he fears that he has been following a way of his own which was not consistent with his position as Lawyer, Physician, Clergyman, with that which was due from him to his clients, his patients, his flock. A Conscience of Duty wholly apart from any punishments which may be inflicted on him for the neglect of it is awakened in him; he asks whether this duty has been done. Suppose some opinion or censure or even punishment has brought out that Conscience; still it is there. The opinion, the censure, the punishment has only called it forth—availed nothing till it was called forth. So here again is a multitude of cases, various as the circumstances and

Cases of Conscience most nu-

as the characters of individuals are various, but all of the same kind; all beginning with the discovery in each man that he has responsibilities, which no class, no majority of men, has imposed upon him, and from which no class, no majority of men, can release him.

merous and various in England.

The treatment of such cases—the methods which may or may not be effectual for settling them—I am not concerned with in this Lecture. But I may perhaps assist you in understanding better the cases themselves, if I wander for a moment beyond the limits of our own country. Suppose an American, living in one of what were then Slave States thirty years ago. He is brought up under that discipline which Mr Bain recommends for the formation of a Conscience. He is taught to consider the slave as a chattel. He has acquired all the habits which naturally and necessarily develope themselves out of such a belief, when it has become a belief. He perceives the absurdity—the intense absurdity—of treating a *thing*, a chattel, as capable of rights, as able to form contracts. Perhaps some religious notion about the doom of a race helps to strengthen what would else have been merely the tradition of a Society. Suddenly the question presents itself to him, 'Is the 'premiss, from which the conclusions I have accepted 'logically follow, a correct one? Is this creature a chat-'tel? Do I stand in no relation to him? If not, clearly 'I have no duties to him; he has none to me. If there 'is a relation that must involve duties.' Out of this doubt cases of Conscience have proceeded, which cannot be treated with indifference, for they have produced a revolution in an immense Continent. What I want you to notice is the turning-point in these cases. A Society has organised itself on the ground of *Property*.

Illustration from American Slavery.

The habits 'branded' into the young of the South.

Men contemplated only in re-

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ference to Property.

We are *possessors;* as such we are bound to each other. These creatures are simply *possessions.* The Society has taught its members to look upon each other in this light, to fraternise on this ground. The discovery of which I have just spoken does not merely affect the Negro. Are there not *relations* between those who have called themselves the superior race? Are not these Relations a deeper ground of Society than Property can ever be? By acknowledging the manhood of the black they obtain a new conception of their own.

The possessor discovering his own dignity as a man.

You will perceive that the question when it takes this form may lead to cases of Conscience affecting many beside the slave owners in North America; it may issue in a different belief respecting the foundation of Society in all countries.

Prudence.

Before I leave this division of my subject I will say a word about the Prudence, of which Mr Bain has written at great length. He connects it with his idea of the Conscience. So do I with mine. Prudence is the contracted form of Providence. It means foresight. Now foresight I believe will never be found to exist without reflection or retrospection. The man looks before and after. Till he learns to say 'I,' and thence 'I ought,' he will exercise no retrospection; he will therefore exercise no prudence. Whilst he is the slave of present impressions, still more whilst he is under the dread of punishments that a majority may inflict on him, he cannot look forward; he dares not. This is a very old opinion, inculcated by those who have been most devoted to the cultivation of prudence. You in these days do not know much of Miss Edgeworth's tales, or her books of Education. Many of us old men were nurtured upon them. In these works what is

Miss Edgeworth a teacher of prudential morality.

called heroical morality, as well as what is called spiritual morality, was passed over; they were almost exclusively devoted to the formation of prudent habits. But so far was this accomplished lady from encouraging boys or girls to follow the will or habits of a majority, that she evidently desired above all things to teach them the danger of that subjection. She would have each one of them learn to say 'I ought' and 'I ought not;' on no other terms did she see any chance of making them prudent. To 'that higher grade of the prudential motive' which a man or woman reaches who has utterly accepted the yoke of Society and determines to follow it wherever it leads, Miss Edgeworth never aspired. Amidst many defects which I have since discovered in her education I cannot say how grateful I am to her for teaching us that we should labour diligently *not* to seek that elevation.

But a vigorous protestant against the morality which consists in submission to the will of a Society.

III. I come to the last class of cases of which I proposed to speak. I can illustrate it best by a familiar instance. The Greek fleet is stayed at Aulis by contrary winds. An acknowledged prophet declares that nothing will change the wind but a Sacrifice. No Sacrifice will avail but the daughter of Agamemnon. A power which is declared to be divine, which the opinion of the Greeks holds to be divine, imposes the command. It is obeyed.

The Conscience in conflict with the religious maxims of an age.

> Nam sublata virum manibus tremebundaque ad aras
> Deducta est; non ut solemni more sacrorum
> Perfecto posset claro comitari hymenæo,
> Sed casta inceste nubendi tempore in ipso
> Hostia concideret mactatu mœsta parentis.

Whether the story is true or not, even if it and the whole Trojan war are to be consigned to the region

The sacrifice of Iphigenia.

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of fable, it bears witness of facts that were characteristic of the age to which it was referred, and of many later ages; of facts which belong to Greek history, to Hindoo history, to the history of modern Europe. The poet who recorded the tale of Iphigenia so brilliantly felt as you know that it concerned his own nation and his own time; otherwise it would not have inspired him with such indignation, he would not have uttered the passionate cry

Horror of Lucretius.

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.

He believed that the religion of Rome in his own civilised period might persuade men, if not to such a sacrifice as that of Iphigenia, yet to very monstrous crimes. From a religion of this kind—from the worship of capricious and cruel gods—he fled to such notions of physics as Epicurus could supply him with; he thought he could discern the vestiges of an order in the world which these notions of a divine government could not disturb.

His cry for an Order.

This poet, then, who counted himself an Atheist was demanding an Order; he was solemnly protesting against that which seemed to him the transgression of an Order. Powers which persuaded to evil deeds he could not recognise, let the claims which they put forth, let the terrors of public opinion which enforced these claims, be what they might.

Will a knowledge of the Nature of Things *supply the Order?*

This I hold to be a protest of the Conscience, one which the poet would never have made if there had not been a Conscience in him. Because there was that Conscience in him, I believe he could never have been satisfied with those hints of an outward Order which his Greek teacher offered him; no not if those

hints could have ripened for him into the actual discoveries of modern science. Still there would have been the question, 'Is there not somewhere that which ought to rule me?' still there would have been the answer, 'These things ought *not* to rule me.' As long as there is that terrible 'I,' there will be the 'ought' linked to it; there will be the demand, What am I? what therefore ought I to do? And in that is implied, as Mr Bentham and Mr Bain no less than any other philosophers teach us, the further demand, 'What must I obey?'

The ever-recurring question, What am I?

Vainly, therefore, are we told that if there is a Conscience in each man that Conscience must be its own standard, that the only escape is to suppose a Conscience created by a Social Opinion. All such propositions look very plausible upon paper; bring them to the test of living experience and they melt away. There is that in me which asks for the Right, for that which ought to have dominion over me; there is that in me which says emphatically, 'This is 'not that Right, this ought not to have dominion 'over me.' I may be long in learning what the Right is; I may make a thousand confused efforts to grasp it; I may try to make it for myself; I may let others make it for me. But always there will be a witness in me that what I have made or any one has made, is not what I ought to serve; that is not the right, not what I am seeking for, not what is seeking me.

Good and evil.

This class of Cases then lies beneath both the others; they are derived from it; they enter into it. The demands of Pleasure or of Nature upon me, the demands of Society upon me, both suggest cases of their own. But *the* case is that which the Roman poet

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Ought I to murder a child at the bidding of Calchas?

has raised. There are powers which demand *evil* things of me. Ought I to acknowledge their demand? Very numerous are the cases which fall under this head, complicated in various ways, taking different forms in different times and places. But no one who speaks of Casuistry at all can dare to evade them, or must be hindered from handling them through fear of the censures which he may incur from one set of philosophers or another.

The legend of Macbeth true for all times.

It is easy to tell me that in former days men believed in a number of evil powers, and that in our days we have cast off such dark imaginations. Whenever I read Macbeth with its blasted heath and its witch scenery, I feel certain that the story is essentially true; that no change of circumstances or of opinions has made it less real less tremendous for our time than for the time in which it was composed. I know not anything about stage hags, what they may be like, whether they are men or women. But suggestions do come to a man now as of old which he dallies with, which mix with dreams of ambition that he has been secretly cherishing, which seem to gain a wonderful encouragement from unexpected events, which are deepened by some counsellor less scrupulous than himself. And then come the opportunities for the crime, the first image of which

> did unfix his hair,
> And made his seated heart knock at his ribs
> Against the use of nature.

The invisible taking visible shapes.

Before it is done the Conscience which has been resisted within presents itself in outward visible forms, the bloody dagger, the handle towards the hand which cannot be clutched. After it is done there rise before

the imagination of the man ghastly figures which recal those whom he has put out of his way; an effort must be made to extinguish remorse by fresh crimes. The superstitions do not cease with the dark deeds, they become more fixed, more intense. 'There must be some 'rulers of my destiny; why should they not be evil 'rulers; why should these not be invoked?' But they cannot control the doom of their servant. Onward he goes to it. He hears that the Conscience of some sharer in his crime which had seemed unmoved when his was quailing, has come forth in the hour of sleep; that there has been a damned spot on the hand which no water could wash out. And then having supped full of horrors, and being incapable of tasting any more, he can only say,

The end.

> Life is a walking shadow, a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more.

That is an ower true tale for the reign of Victoria as well as for the reign of Elizabeth or of Duncan.

And so a poet of the 19th century felt it to be. Do you know Lord Byron's Manfred? Have you read that wonderful play of the Conscience? It has none of the variety of Macbeth; Byron had not Shakspeare's power of making us see a number of different men, each distinct in himself, each acting on the thought and life of the others. The interest is concentrated in the hero. For that reason it serves our purpose better. No one who reads it can believe it to be a mere work of imagination. There is a burning individual experience in every sentence. Count Manfred has come of an ancient line. His castle in the Alps. The monarch of mountains is continually before him. He revels in

Manfred.

His circumstances.

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the grand forms of Nature. But they have become, like everything else, an oppression to him. There is on him the burden of a great crime. He has power over spirits. They are ready to do his bidding, to give him any thing that he asks. He asks forgetfulness. That is the one thing they cannot give. What else is of any worth to him? The form of her whom he has injured rises before him. What he has done is clearer to him than ever before. He is on the edge of a precipice. Why may he not throw himself over it? What if he did? Will the vision depart? A chamois hunter saves him and brings him to his castle. At length the destined hour arrives. A priest visits him in his dying hours, a kindly well-intentioned man willing to use his knowledge and the powers of his office for the good of his fellow-creature. It is in vain. What are subordinate agents to him? He is face to face with the powers of good and of evil. Which is the stronger? Which is to prevail?

The powers that obey him. What they cannot give.

Lord Byron, you see, is as little able as Shakspeare to dispense with the aid of spirits. No poet will be able who speaks of the struggles of Conscience. Those struggles carry us into a region beyond the visible world. It may be a region of hags or of milder powers which can give us all blessings except the one we want, deliverance from the evil that haunts us. Is there any purer region, is there any better society, in which we might dwell? Is there any more effectual deliverer?

Spirits of darkness.

LECTURE V.

RULES OF THE CONSCIENCE.

I HAVE spoken to you of cases of Conscience. From these the Casuist derives his name. I come now to the Rules by which Casuists have tried to determine these cases.

The adviser in legal and medical cases.

What has suggested these rules? A man who is troubled with the questions, 'Ought I to do this? Ought I not to do that?' has just the same impulse to seek for advice as the man who is engaged in any controversy about property, or who is suffering from some bodily complaint. As I ask a Lawyer who has studied books of cases the judgments which have been delivered upon them the general maxims or the particular statutes which bear upon them, to tell me what is his opinion of the particular case which I submit to him—cannot I find one who will explain to me this debate which is going on within me, who will say what is the proper decision upon it? As I try to explain the pains I have suffered, the symptoms which I have observed in myself, to a physician, trusting that his learning will suggest questions which may draw out clearer statements from me than I have been able to make, and that the same learning will suggest reme-

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The Adviser in cases of Conscience.

dies for what he has discovered to be my disorder—cannot I, in like manner, make some one understand the influences which sway me to the right or to the left; cannot he make me understand them better than I do; cannot he put me on some method of dealing with them, so that I may not continue in restless embarrassment, or escape from it by some rash determination which I may lament hereafter?

The Casuist by right of birth or sympathy.

The demand for such counsellors and prescribers has been great in all ages; the supply has answered to the demand. Some of them have been suggested to us by the circumstances of our birth, by the accident of our position. A parent who does not identify authority with punishment wins the confidence of his child in his wisdom and in his affection. The less he tries to worm any secrets from him the more frankly they are told; the utterance of them is a relief for the present, the reproof and the warning which follow a help for the future. The friend, judicious or injudicious, to whom we ascribe great discernment or experience, is resorted to next; he may give us hints which will shew us the way out of a confusion, or he may make the confusion worse confounded; the knots of the conscience may be untied or cut by his hands, or may be entangled hopelessly. And then comes the professional director of the Conscience, to whom is attributed in most countries of Christendom, by not a few men and women in our own, a divine capacity of penetrating into the sources of the derangements from which the Conscience is suffering, and of administering the medicines which it requires.

The professional Casuist.

Are such advisers to be trusted in virtue of their personal sagacity or their official illumination? The

Lawyer points to the Statute book, to maxims which have been established for ages, to a series of judgments the result of careful investigations by able men. The Physician appeals to experiments upon the actual frame of man, to a science ever expanding which rests on those experiments. Has the director his books to which we may turn for the correction of his own private instincts? Can he make us aware of the laws and principles by which his opinions on special cases are guided?

Demand for books or rules.

The necessity for such books began to be very loudly proclaimed in that very bookish century, the 17th. It was affirmed that nothing could be more dangerous than to trust particular persons with the authority which they claimed to settle questions affecting the life of states as well as of individual men. He who could tell men what they ought or ought not to do, what should be their purposes as well as their acts, was exercising a dominion which no king or parliament could exercise, which might greatly interfere with the dominion that kings and parliaments had a right to exercise. It was found as a matter of fact that the influence of Confessors and Directors over the consciences of monarchs and statesmen, was such as affected in a number of ways the condition of nations; there was a complaint deep, sometimes loud, that it did not cultivate in them any special reverence for veracity and honourable dealing. Let us know what the maxims of these directors of the Conscience are, was the cry, what rules they lay down for the acts and life of men. There was, it must be owned, no tardiness in answering this cry. The volumes recording Cases of Conscience as well as solutions of the Cases

Power of the Casuist

Danger of this power.

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and rules for the guidance of the Conscience which that age accumulated, would alarm you if I only enumerated the titles of a few, more still if you looked into them, far more if you were fairly to examine their contents. I do not enjoin any such task upon you, or recommend it. I do not think that would be a fair way of testing the question, whether Rules of the Conscience are ever likely to be found which will settle Cases of the Conscience. I who hold that none such ever have been found or will be found, should think I was taking an unfair advantage of you—that I was bribing you to support my opinion—if I drew my examples of them from books written in Latin, by men of a different Church and a different Nation from our own, many of whom besides have earned a very evil reputation through the denunciations of eminent divines of their own Church, sometimes of their own nation. But if I could light upon a set of Rules for the Conscience, drawn out with care and elaboration by an English Churchman, who desired especially to avoid the errors into which Casuists abroad had fallen, a man open to no suspicion of being dull or crabbed, a man whose character as well as his intellect has stood the trial of more than one century and commanded the admiration of the most opposite schools, those rules I should regard as offering safe materials for an experiment. Our illustrious Bishop Taylor fulfils all the conditions which I have enumerated. He did not write in a hard scholastical dialect, but was master of the most copious and picturesque of English styles. He was so various in his ways of contemplating subjects, his erudition was derived from such a number of sources, that nearly every man whatever his opinions

Latin Casuistry not a fair test of its worth.

Jeremy Taylor.

His style.

may be, whatever his education may have been, will recognise something in Taylor to countenance his theories and to meet his tastes. The Romanist, the Protestant, the most vehement defender of the right of men to speak out their thoughts let them be ever so much opposed to established doctrines, may each point to works of the Bishop in which his leading maxims are learnedly and eloquently enforced. Yet his mind did not vacillate either from feebleness or from self-interest. He yielded to the force of arguments, and could put them forth with the dexterity of a special pleader, also with an undoubted conviction of their soundness; his attachment to his own Church was strongest when it was in trouble and persecution. An intense sympathy with goodness, an indifference to everything which he could not connect with goodness or which he did not suppose ministered to it directly or indirectly, was his great characteristic; he could romanise or protest against Romanism, he could be tolerant or intolerant, just as he believed that the interests of goodness were furthered by one mode of thinking, by one course of action, or the other.

His catholicity.

His love of goodness.

Among all the works of Jeremy Taylor, that to which he undoubtedly devoted the most toil and his learning was his *Ductor Dubitantium*, or the Rule of Conscience. He engaged in it when he was in the ripeness of his powers, when he had leisure to gather up the treasures of his thought and reading; all that he had learnt from Jewish Rabbis, from Greek Tragedians, Comedians, Historians and Philosophers, from Roman Orators and Jurists, from the Fathers, from the Schoolmen of the middle ages, from the Jesuits and from those who had opposed the Jesuits in his own

The Ductor Dubitantium.

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Its objects.

day. He had the strongest sense of the mischiefs which mankind had suffered from the foreign Casuists who had obtained the greatest popularity as deciders of moral questions. "Though by violence and force," he exclaims, "they have constrained their Churches "into a union of faith, like beasts into a pound, yet "they have made their cases of Conscience and the "actions of their lives unstable as the face of the "waters, and immeasurable as the dimensions of the "moon." He was anxious to provide the Reformed Churches "with a semination and culture which were "much wanted in them; for our labours," he says, "have hitherto been unemployed in the description "of the rules of Conscience and of casuistical Theo-"logy." He knew, he says, "that all practical truths "were to be found out without much contradiction and "dispute, but that what God had made plain men had "intricated, and the easy commandment was wrapped "up in uneasy learning."

Desire to be practical.

The sincerity of Taylor's intention to provide a real aid to his countrymen in their daily practice, and an escape from the sophistries by which they had been turned into disputers, is evident from every page of his work as well as from the tenour of his life. Circumstances seemed to conspire with his design. He had composed his book in what he considered a period of trouble and desolation; his preface is dated 'from 'my study in Portmore in Kilultagh' the year before the Restoration. But he was able to dedicate his labours, To the Most Sacred Majesty of Charles II. King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith. "We have been," he could say, "sorely "smitten and for a long time.....But now our duty

Time of the book.

Dedication of it.

"stands on the sunny side, it is our work to rejoice in "God and in God's Anointed, and to be glad and "worthily to accept of our prosperity is all our busi- "ness.....It was impossible to live without our King, "but as slaves live, such as are civilly dead, and per- "sons condemned to the metals; we lived to the lusts "and insolvency of others, not at all to ourselves, to "our own civil and religious comforts. But now our "joys are mere and unmixed; for that we may do our "duty and have our reward at once, God hath sent "your Majesty amongst us that we may feel the plea- "sures of obedience, and reap the fruits of that govern- "ment which God loves and uses." Then having modestly asked His Majesty to accept his two mites as a signification of his joy; he adds this reason for his choice of a gift, "For your Majesty being by God "appointed *Custos utriusque tabulæ*, since like Moses "you are descended to us with the two tables of the "law in your hand, and that you will best govern by "the arguments and compulsory of Conscience, and "this alone is the greatest firmament of obedience, "whatsoever be the measure of Conscience *res est fisci*, "is part of your own propriety and enters into your "exchequer."

The joy of the loyal.

Prospects of the new reign.

The work which this Dedication introduces is divided into four Books. The first treats of Conscience, the kinds of it and the general Rules of conducting them. Under this head we hear of the Right or Sure Conscience, of the Confident or Erroneous Conscience, of the Probable or Thinking Conscience, of the Doubtful Conscience, of the Simple Conscience. The two following are on Laws natural, human and divine; the fourth is on the Nature and

Plan of the book.

Division of Consciences.

LECT. V.

Causes of Good and Evil, their limits and circumstances, their aggravations and diminutions. The dedication and the division will shew you how seriously Taylor engaged in his task; what pains he bestowed upon it. I hope to derive valuable lessons from both. But I am afraid one of the lessons will be, that Rules of the Conscience, even when they are unfolded with the greatest ability by a thoroughly good earnest practical man, are unfavourable to goodness and earnestness, and are not helpful in practice. I do not think Taylor's labour was wasted if it demonstrated this point; if it shewed where we *cannot* turn for aid in our straits. Such a man however will not leave us to a merely negative conclusion. There are hints scattered throughout his book which, if we use them aright, may tell us what we do want, though all the most skilfully framed rules should fail us.

Definition of the Conscience.

I. As Taylor proposes to treat of the Conscience and its different kinds he begins with a definition of the Conscience. It is this. *Conscience is the mind of a man governed by a Rule and measured by the proportions of Good and Evil, in order to Practice,* viz. *to conduct all our Relations, and all our intercourse between God, our neighbours, and ourselves; that is, in all moral actions.* A most difficult passage surely to construe; a definition which requires a number of definitions to make it intelligible. Without striving to devise such definitions let us consider how it will meet the wants of a man in any perplexity about that which he ought or ought not to do.

The definition examined.

Supposed dialogue with a man seeking help.

'*Conscience is the mind of a man.*' But cries the man, 'I have two minds. I am drawn two ways. I 'want to know which mind I should be of, which way

'I should take. That is the very doubt which has 'brought me to your book.' The answer would be, 'Do not you perceive what I am telling you? Con- 'science is the mind of a man *governed by a rule.*' 'Just so,' would be the rejoinder, 'it is the Rule that 'I have come to seek for. I want a rule to tell me 'which of my two minds is the proper mind.' 'We 'shall come to that presently. I am going to furnish 'you with a set of Rules for all different cases.' 'Ex- 'cellent! I shall rejoice to hear them. But just now 'I am occupied with *this* case. How am I to decide 'that?' '*It must be measured by the proportions of* '*good and evil.*' 'I am sure it must, and you will 'teach me to apply the measures; you will shew me 'what the proportions are.' 'All in due time. To- 'wards the end of my treatise you will have rules 'about the nature and causes of good and evil.' 'Yes, 'but I have something which I must do, or leave 'undone, now.' 'That is most desirable. All these 'measures and rules and proportions are *in order to* '*Practice.*' 'Must I defer my action then till I have 'made myself master of them all?' 'If I tell you 'how *to conduct all your relations towards God, your* '*neighbour, and yourself, that is, all moral actions*, you 'will surely be able to find out the propriety or im- 'propriety of this particular action.' Taylor, however, would not leave his poor client or patient in the utter despair which such an announcement must produce. He would tell him of various cases through which *A*, and *B*, and *C* and *D* had passed. He would tell him that *A* had a confident Conscience, *B* a doubtful Conscience, *C* a probable or thinking Conscience, *D* a scrupulous Conscience. 'And mine, which is it of all

The result.

LECT. V.

'these?' 'Oh, you shall have rules which may enable 'you to discover that point.' 'And then I shall want 'more rules to know how to use the rules that fitted 'the case of *A* or *B* or *C* or *D*.'

The scrupulous Conscience.

Let us take one instance, that of the scrupulous Conscience, to see how this will work. Under rule I. we read this: "A scruple is a great trouble of mind "proceeding from a little motive, and a great indis- "position, by which the Conscience though sufficiently "determined by proper arguments dares not proceed "to action, or if it do it cannot rest." An admirable description; who is not able to verify it in his own experience? It is further illustrated by these lively remarks. "Very often it hath no reason at all for "its inducement; but proceeds from indisposition of "body, pusillanimity, melancholy, a troubled head, "sleepless nights, the society of the timorous, from "solitariness, ignorance, or unseasoned imprudent no- "tices of things, indigested learning, strong fancy or "weak judgment, from anything that may abuse the "reason into irresolution and restlessness. It is in- "deed a direct walking in the dark where we see "nothing to affright us, but we fancy many things, "and the fantasms produced in the lower regions of "fancy, and nursed by folly, and borne upon the arms "of fear do trouble us. But if reason be its parent, "then it is born in the twilight, and the mother is so "little that the daughter is a fly with a short head "and a long sting, enough to trouble a wise man, "but not enough to satisfy the appetite of a little "bird. The reason of a scruple is ever as obscure as "the light of a glowworm, not fit to govern any action, "and yet is sufficient to stand in the midst of all

Felicitous description of it.

"its enemies, and like the flies of Egypt, vex and "trouble a whole army." You see how charmingly Taylor writes when he forgets his rules and gives himself to painting pictures which was his proper occupation. There is not a page of his book which will not furnish you with some exquisite gem of this kind sometimes taken from an older writer and made far better by its setting, sometimes derived from the stores of his own imagination, good for use if we will search for it, as well as for ornament. But when we return from such flights to those rules which are in order to practice, the solutions are so puzzling that the author is driven to say—"God hath ap- "pointed spiritual persons guides of souls whose office "is to direct and comfort, to refresh the weary and "to strengthen the weak, to confirm the strong and "to instruct the doubtful, and therefore to use their "advice is the proper remedy which God hath ap- "pointed." That may be so; but were not these rules of Conscience drawn up expressly because these guides of souls had "made the cases of conscience and the "actions of men's lives as unstable as the water and "immeasurable as the dimensions of the moon"? Can it be the ultimate resource to fall back upon them, to confess that the rules are impotent without them, and that the final appeal must be to their wisdom? And yet if the comparison is between rules and the very lowest kind of human sympathy, the man who is in any difficulty will choose the latter. If he is not able to find the amount of illumination which he craves for, he will suppose that there must be some one in whom it dwells and to whose guidance he can fully trust himself. Whatever delusion there is in that

Works, Vol. XII. p. 174.

Lame and impotent conclusion, p. 180.

Men will always prefer a man to a rule.

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opinion, Taylor has not shewn us the way out of it; he has done much to strengthen it.

Rules tested by the first class of Cases—those concerning Pleasure.

If what I have said to you before about the Conscience is true, the failure of such rules was inevitable. Try them by any of the cases of which I spoke in my last lecture. A man is disposed to indulge in certain pleasures, say of the appetite. He doubts whether he ought to indulge them, whether they will not interfere with his health or his work. The physician may give him some hints about the first; about the second he knows better himself than any one can tell him. General rules will only lead him to that comparison of his own case with others which issued, as I observed, in so many bewilderments, in such insincerity of practice. The rules prescribe for a multitude; what he wants is a prescription for himself. He will therefore do as Taylor bids him. He will ask the spiritual guide to interpret the rules, to apply them to his circumstances. And then he may be involved in all that system of alternate severities and indulgences, the perils of which induced Taylor to undertake his treatise. The passage from sound Asceticism to the Asceticism which glorifies pain for its own sake, to the Asceticism which reckons how much pleasure or exemption from pain can be secured by the relinquishment of pleasure or the endurance of pain, will be promoted not hindered by the formal rule as well as by the special expounders of it.

The Result; perpetual vacillation.

Cases of obedience or disobedience to social maxims.

So in those cases which regard Society. Taylor proposed to lay down rules which may help us to conduct all our relations. I said that a man often finds himself in circumstances which lead him to ask, 'Ought 'I to do what the Corporation of which I am a mem-

'ber commands? Can I fulfil my relations to this 'man or that set of men if I do?' Of all the abuses to which the Casuistry of spiritual doctors had led, and which Taylor desired to correct, there were none so great and scandalous as those which concerned this subject. The ecclesiastical Corporation of Christendom had taught with pertinacity the lesson which had a Jewish origin. "*If a man shall say to his father and mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift,* (to some ecclesiastical treasury) *he need no more do ought for his father and mother.*" The maxim of the Society had been used to disparage the relation in which the man found himself at his birth. So again the maxim that no faith is to be kept with heretics, is just as legitimate a deduction from the principle that the heretic stands in no relation to those who have excommunicated him, as the doctrine that there can be no contract with a slave is from the principle that the slave is a chattel. But could any *rules* about men's relations counteract, even in the smallest degree, theories of this kind or the acts and habits which were justified by them? The relations must be closer to the man than the rules can ever be; if he makes them dependent upon rules he renounces them. He will ask what acts or gifts will compensate the neglect of care for the father or mother; pecuniary compensations will occur to him as the most natural, since the money scales will be those in which he has learned to weigh all affections. And the Society which he has been taught to regard as that which adjusts compensations and as more sacred than all others will be the one to receive the offerings. The rules will be found inoperative, the man with the doubtful conscience will go to the

The ecclesiastical Corban.

Rules will not counteract it.

LECT. V.

guide of souls to interpret them, and that will be the result.

Third case; commands pretending to be divine.

So again in those more tremendous cases, of which the sacrifice of Iphigenia furnished us with an instance, no one knew better than Taylor how little directors of the Conscience were to be trusted; no one would have tried more zealously to find some rules which might avert the tragedies they had caused. But it is just in these very cases that the force of rules is scattered to the winds. How can they be alleged against a claim which is said to have proceeded from a superhuman authority? That must override all rules devised by men; it comes forth with the boast that it can. It is to a power which owns no rules that the father surrenders his daughter.

In what circumstances rules may be profitable.

Why then do men who strive to be practical, as Taylor strove in the best sense of the word—why do men who claim to be practical in a much lower sense than his—agree in liking rules which, on this shewing, are not practical, but the reverse of practical? The explanation is this. Rules have a use of their own which it would be absurd and ungrateful to deny.

Difference between maxims of behaviour and principles of life.

There are many points in a man's demeanour towards his fellow-men which without any evil intention on his part, nay, when his intentions are full of kindness, may irritate and wound them. There are many influences which he may receive from them, through the very frankness and openness of his disposition, which may do him harm. The maxims and rules of experience are directed most beneficially to these particulars of conduct. They are often effectual when we meet with them in books applied to persons, real or imaginary, whose blemishes and awkwardnesses remind us of our

own. They are more likely to be effectual when they come from the lips of some parent or judicious friend; then they bear upon us with the momentum of affection and prudence combined; the Conscience recognises them in recognising the voice which utters them. But the parent or friend if he is wise as well as prudent,—if he is not a stranger to inward struggles,—will not apply such admonitions to any of those great debates of the man with himself which give the force and interpretation to the word Conscience. He will understand that these affect the resolution to act, not the mode or shape which the action shall take when it has been resolved on.

Polonius the man of maxims.

I would illustrate this difference from the play of Hamlet. Old Polonius is a man of great experience, within certain limits he is a man of prudence. He is moreover kind-hearted, a good father, full of affection for his son and daughter, though inclined to be fussy with them as with everybody. He is taking leave of Laertes, who is on his way to France. What lessons can be more sensible, more likely to impress themselves on the memory of a dutiful son, exaggerating, as it became him to do, his father's knowledge of the world, than these rules? They are familiar to you of course; still I will read them.

Where the maxims have force.

> And these few precepts in thy memory
> See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
> Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
> Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
> The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
> Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
> But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
> Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
> Of entrance to a quarrel: but, being in,

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Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are of a most select and generous chief in that.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all,—To thine ownself be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!

Where they become contemptible.

But this same Polonius tries to penetrate the secret of a man whose Conscience is engaged in a fearful struggle, with whom 'To be or not to be' is the question. What becomes of his rules and maxims then? Hamlet calls him a prating meddlesome fool and we ratify his opinion. The sagacious counsellor, the well-trained diplomatist, has ventured into a region of which he knows nothing. He has tried his ordinary rules and plummets, and they fail ludicrously. He has no resource but in the vulgarest cunning,—in expedients which must have struck the better man that was in him as grovelling and which seem to us as foolish as they were mean.

They may lead to outrages on the Conscience.

The two Tables.

II. From these instances of the use of rules I might pass very easily to the two books of Taylor on Laws, natural, human and divine. But I should only bewilder you if I drew you into these distinctions before I led you to reflect on Law itself, and its relation to the Conscience. Another lecture must be devoted to that subject. I will not however leave the one in which we have been engaged without giving you a hint

or two chiefly drawn from the experience of Taylor's time, partly illustrated by our own, which may help you to perceive the enormous difference between Rules and Laws. Charles the Second, Taylor tells us, descended like Moses with the two Tables of the Law in his hand. Like Moses he broke both those Tables; only not through horror of the idolatry and the revelries to which he saw his people inclined, rather because the Tables inconveniently forbad the idolatry and the revelries. Rules of the Conscience, with all the exceptions and indulgencies which rules involve, he could approve; rules he would enforce upon the Consciences of his subjects. It was only the Law which bound subjects and monarch both that he cast aside. Some of you may have looked this summer at Mr Frith's picture of the scene in Whitehall the night before Charles' last illness of which Evelyn was witness; most of you will have read Lord Macaulay's description of that scene. Compare that with Taylor's dedication, and you will have some notion of that government by 'the arguments and compulsory of the Conscience' which the year 1660 was to inaugurate.

Charles II. no enemy of Rules,

but a hater of Law.

Mr Frith's elaborate design recalls to me one by another artist, which I like better to think of and which, if as sad in itself, contains a more hopeful moral. I do not know how many of you may have seen Mr Holman Hunt's picture of the Awakened Conscience. Those who have seen will not I fancy have forgotten it. There is not the crowd of figures which distract us in the Whitehall group. There are only two, a man and a woman sitting in a somewhat gaudily furnished room beside a piano. His fingers are on the instrument. His face, which is reflected in a mirror, is handsome

The Awakened Conscience.

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and vacant, evidently that of a man about town who supposes the brightest part of creation is intended to minister to his amusement. A music-book on the floor is open at the words, 'Oft in the stilly night.' That tune has struck some chord in his companion's heart. Her face of horror says what no language could say, 'That tune has told me of other days when I was not as I am now.' The tune has done what the best rules that ever were devised could not do. It has brought a message from a father's house.

The Windsor beauties.

This excellent artist has drawn me away for a moment from the age of Charles II., reminding me that events which were passing in that time are repeated in ours—that the laws of both times are the same. I return from his picture to a series which represents most truly the same period as Mr Frith's. They are those which hang round the state apartments in Windsor Castle. They commemorate the beauties who once shone in the Court of the Restoration. Those portraits sometimes exhibit a life like that which Lord Byron describes as still lingering over the faces of the dead; sometimes only the blankness and dreariness of death. But taken in connection with Mr Hunt's sketch I cannot help dreaming that some one of these may have listened to Taylor's brilliant and terrible eloquence, may have even practised not a few of his rules,—yet continuing in the same bondage as before:—and then may in some note of other days, some snatch of forgotten music, have heard a mightier voice saying, "Loose her, and let her go."

Degrees of Good and Evil.

III. If that is but a dream, at least it is one which forbids me to speak of Taylor's book about Good and Evil, their nature and causes, their limits and circum-

stances, their aggravations and diminutions. For the poor woman with an awakened Conscience will have said, 'Talk not to me of limits and circumstances, of 'aggravations and diminutions. These are two powers, 'to one of which I must yield up my soul and body.' I am sure Taylor would have said in his inmost heart as a man, whatever he may have written as a *Ductor Dubitantium*, 'By one of these I will hold for ever, 'against the other I will fight for ever.'

Good and Evil as Powers.

LECTURE VI.

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

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Are there two Consciences?

WE are very familiar with the phrase 'Liberty of Conscience.' We hear it from panegyrists of England who boast that we have more of it than other nations, from Sects which complain that they are deprived of it. Is the Conscience of which these panegyrists and these complainers speak the one with which Casuistry is occupied? In Butler's Discourses on Human Nature, the Conscience is largely discussed. Are there any sentences in these discourses that suggest the thought which this phrase suggests to those who repeat it?

Evil of the notion that there are.

As I have especially desired to shew you that the Conscience has no technical signification which is distinct from its signification in every-day life, I must be anxious to relieve your minds from a doubt of this kind. The study of Casuistry must be mischievous if it leads us to the use of words in double senses, if it establishes a school nomenclature which is composed out of the words that are current in the world, and which puts on them an entirely different stamp. It may be very useful if it brings ordinary words to some test, if it redeems them from the service of clubs and platforms where they acquire a sense just as artificial, just as misleading as any which a College Lecturer

The doctrine that the Conscience must always be in

could impose on them. Be sure that Liberty of Conscience is a sacred expression, however much it may have been profaned. But is it not a political expression? Does it not point to the policy of statesmen, and of the nations which they direct? It may have much to do with their policy. *What* it has to do with that I believe we shall not understand unless we first understand what it has to do with you and me. I have treated the Conscience, its cases and its rules, in reference to each of us, distinctly. Unless each of us called himself an I, the Conscience I have said would signify nothing. Only by remembering that position have I been able to get any glimpse of light respecting the Liberty of Conscience.

each man not to be departed from.

But if I adhere strictly to my method, I must begin by changing this form of speech; by inverting it. I have never allowed myself to lose sight of the origin of the word Conscience. Though I have distinguished it from Consciousness, and shewn you how utterly unlike the Self-conscious man is to the Conscientious man, I have always treated them as kindred words. In examining Taylor's definition of the Conscience, it became evident that we should fall into inextricable confusion if we let the plain etymology escape, and translated the Conscience into 'a mind governed by a rule.' The Conscience of Liberty is therefore for me a more intelligible phrase than Liberty of Conscience. I would not part with that. We cannot safely part with any form of speech which has been accepted as a veritable utterance of their thoughts by our ancestors and our contemporaries. I shall hope to enter more thoroughly into their meaning if you allow me for a little while to pursue my own course.

The phrase Conscience of Liberty not intended to displace the other.

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Why it is adopted.

The advantage which I gain by the change is this. I do not wish to assume that the Conscience is something good in itself. Taylor talks, as I told you, of a scrupulous Conscience, a doubtful Conscience, a confident Conscience. Most men have talked of an Evil Conscience. Horace says:

> Hic murus aheneus esto
> *Nil* conscire sibi, nullâ pallescere culpâ.

Bad epithets affixed to the Conscience.

He deems it a protection for a man to be free from the conscience of faults which make him turn pale. Those who dwell on the misery of an accusing Conscience endorse his opinion. We cannot neglect any of these hints. They all betoken some actual experience; they have all their worth in practice. The words 'Liberty of Conscience,' taken by themselves, still more when taken with their ordinary associations, seem to intimate that the Conscience left to itself is always grand and glorious, incapable of debasement or degradation. No such impression is conveyed by the words Conscience of Liberty. They do not import that there may not be also a Conscience of Slavery. The very first remark which I shall have to make in considering them is, that there *always* will be a Conscience of Slavery where there is a Conscience of Liberty.

The Conscience of Slavery.

(1) Mr Bentham has taught us to despise the Stoics, calling them Ascetics, and saying that they preferred Pain to Pleasure. I have admitted that there were Stoics who deserved his censures, who did learn to regard Pain with a certain complacency, as if it were a good in and for itself; who glorified themselves on the endurance of it. I did *not* admit that either Asceticism or Stoicism necessarily involved this honour to

Bentham's attack on the Stoics.

pain, or this vanity in the choice of it. I did not think the essence of the doctrine or of the practice lay in the abuse of it. For ourselves I maintained that those were in the greatest danger of sliding into the least profitable kinds of Stoical Asceticism who had accepted the doctrine that Pleasure and Pain are our Sovereigns most cordially, and had acted upon it most habitually. In revenge for the injuries to health and for the imbecility which had been the fruits of indulgence, they were apt to plunge headlong into a scorn of enjoyment, an entertainment of penances and tortures.

Unfairness of it if applied to the School universally.

If I had gone further into the question historically, I might have told you that the vulgarest Stoics were to be found among some of the Greek Professors of the theory, who merely maintained it as a theory against Epicureans or other opposers, and that there were among their Roman disciples men who were not professors but practisers, who did not care for the theory except as it helped them to do what they believed they were appointed to do, to suffer what they were appointed to suffer. In such men I have thought, as most students have thought, that there was along with some error and weakness great nobleness. After listening to the denunciations of Mr Bentham against all who dare to hold that opinion, I think so still.

Epictetus.

I am going to speak to you of one of these men. He belongs to the period of the Roman Empire. He cannot be called a Greek though he spoke and wrote in Greek. He cannot be called a Roman, for he was a slave, the slave of a freedman of Nero. You are familiar with the name of Epictetus. His Enchiridion, or that collection of his sayings which is abridged from the reports of him by Arrian, may almost I suppose be

called a school-book. I remember reading it as a boy without much profit. If I had recurred to it as a young man I think it might have done me some service, at least might have made me ashamed of what I was, and of what a heathen slave was able to be.

The slave pitying the Emperor.

Unquestionably he had all the Conscience of Slavery which a man in his condition could have. He was born in that condition. Could he rise out of it? What a chasm separated him even from his master Epaphroditus! who could measure that which separated him from the Emperor of whom that master was the freedman? Shall he fill the world with his groans that he cannot be like Nero; that an irresistible fate has made one the king over all kings, and the other not even a citizen? Epictetus has sent down to us not his groans but his thanksgivings, that he was not bound to be a slave such as he perceived Nero was; that, being Epictetus, he might enjoy freedom if he did not cast it away. For this he said was slavery, to be the victim of the representations made to the senses,—of the impressions which we receive from without. To this ignominious state of bondage Nero was reduced. Able to command all pleasures, able to decline all pains, the poor man was the passive victim of the things about him; he was sinking lower and lower under their dominion; he was less and less able to assert himself. If Epictetus was a slave, submission to these impressions, not the power of a master to send him to the metals or to inflict chastisement on him, was the cause of his slavery. If he did not fasten the chains upon himself, no one else could put them on him; he had the key of the prison-doors.

The source of Slavery.

No man forced to be a slave.

That is the Stoicism of Epictetus. It is the Stoicism

of a man with an intense conscience of slavery, with an intense conscience of freedom. Mere opinions, call them Stoical or any other, he would have dismissed as bewildering like the impressions on his senses, if they did not shew him his way to the freedom—for which he felt that he was intended—which was implied in his being a man, though all his circumstances were ever so much conspiring to enslave him. And do not suppose that there was in him that arrogant notion of his own power to defy his circumstances and his nature which we commonly ascribe to the Stoic. The question with him was too real a one—it too intimately and directly concerned him—to allow of his deluding himself with any vain pretensions. If one moment he maintained that the key of his prison was in his own keeping—in other words, that he could not be a slave unless he yielded to the impressions which made him one—he asserted as strongly the next that he must turn for deliverance to a god who was near him, and watching over him. If he could not trust his impressions, he could not trust himself. He must have a helper, who was higher than himself, who cared more for him than he cared for himself, who knew him better than he knew himself. Epictetus the Heathen did not worship Pain or Pleasure or Nature or any modification of these, however he might be confused by the notions which he had been taught respecting Gods of Pleasure and Pain, or Gods that were merely Powers of Nature. He confessed amidst all perplexities a God over himself, who would set him free from the tyranny of Pain and Pleasure. I wish that all of us who are called Christians had as strong a faith in such a God as he had. Here is an instance of the

Epictetus no worshipper of opinions,

nor of himself,

nor of Pleasure and Pain.

He sought for a divine deliverer from the impressions of sense.

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Conscience of Liberty existing beside the Conscience of Slavery; an instance which encourages us to believe that the most outwardly unpropitious circumstances may be the means of leading a man to know what his state is and to claim it. Mr Hunt's picture, of which I spoke in the last Lecture, extended that observation to a woman who had fallen into the most ignominious servitude,—servitude to her own passions, and to one in greater bondage than herself. The recollection of liberty, the hope of liberty, may come to any, as Epictetus said, who find that there is a stronger force within than the likings and impressions which fasten them to outward things. The Conscience is bidding each of us seek for that liberty; we cannot be content till we have found it.

The Conscience of Social Slavery and of a deliverance from it.

(2) It is exceedingly difficult in practice, as both these examples may shew, to separate the tyranny of Pleasure from the tyranny of Society. They weave together silken chains, which mere strength will never rend asunder. It may be as hard for the Roman slave or the English slave to defy the fashion and the contempt of the Society in which he dwells, as to overcome his own inclinations. I hinted when I was speaking of Cases of Conscience, that the Conscience of Obligation, which is only another word for the Conscience of Relations, was the great antagonist power to this Social oppression. The victim feels, 'I cannot be a 'member of Society unless I set at nought the maxims 'and decrees of Society.' A very remarkable example of this rebellion is afforded by a man, not far removed in time from Epictetus, sharing many of his habits of thought, in a position more unfavourable, as Epictetus deemed, to freedom than his own; for instead of

Marcus Aurelius.

being the slave of an Emperor's freedman, he was himself an Emperor.

I speak of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. He wrote in Greek; he dwelt in all the effeminacy of a Court. But he desired above all things, he says, to be a male and a Roman. What he meant by that we can understand from his acts, and also from his thoughts; for he is one of those who has let us look into the secrets of his life; who has told us what he was striving to be, and what helps and hindrances he met with in his strivings. He had evidently taken account of the causes which had made the Roman a ruler of the world. He had seen that self-restraint had been one main secret of his power; that reverence for the relations in which he found himself had been another. Out of both had come the habit of obedience; that obedience was involved in the oath of the soldier; that obedience was the only security for the fidelity of the citizen. The Roman had been inferior to the Greek, Marcus saw, in the quickness of his perceptions, in his power of interpreting nature. He appreciated the words of Anchises.

The desire to be a male and a Roman.

What it meant.

The secret of Roman power and degradation.

> Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra
> Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus
> Orabunt causas melius, cælique meatus
> Describent radio et surgentia sidera dicent.
> Tu regere imperio populos Romane memento
> Hæ tibi erunt artes.

But what had become of the Arts which had led to this supremacy? Where was the reverence for fathers, the sacredness of the hearth, the devotion of the wife? Where was the security that the soldier would not feel that his weapons were much mightier than his oath;

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that the citizen would not feel that every other citizen stood in his way? Civil wars had rent the Commonwealth in pieces. An Empire had succeeded it. The rulers of the world had felt that they were its gods, and that the business of gods was to draw all the amusement they could out of it, to inflict all the misery they might upon it. Such habits and opinions had become traditional. The atmosphere of the Empire was impregnated with them. To resist them was to resist that education by which, as Mr Bain says, Society brings its pupils into consent with its opinions and its tone.

The habits of Society under the Empire.

Marcus Aurelius did resist this Education. His whole life, at home and abroad, was one continuous effort against it. He aimed at freedom through self-government, through that triumph over external influences and over his own tendencies which Mr Bentham would have called Asceticism, though no one deprecated more than Marcus any useless or affected Asceticism. Specially he aimed at it by the cultivation of reverence for all those to whom he was united by ties of blood, or ties of service. Under that last name he included those who had served him and those whom he was appointed to serve. Nothing that I know is more touching than his enumeration of the debts which he owed to his mother, to his predecessor who had adopted him, to his instructors in every department, to the friends who had preserved him from any flattery, who had given him hints for the fulfilment of any duty. For Duty meant to him exactly the reverse of that which it means in the philosophy of Mr Bain. It was literally that which, under no dread of punishment but with great thankfulness, he con-

Struggle against them.

Gratitude to helpers in the struggle.

The Emperor's conception of Duty.

fessed to be *due* from him. He was aware of the temptation to neglect it; that was the slavish impulse; freedom to perform it was what he sought with all earnestness. To aid his purpose of being a Roman he would avail himself of the helps which Greek professors of philosophy could afford him, admiring those who frequented his court far more than they deserved, humbly using the books which they or their predecessors had compiled, always shunning the display for which so many of them were eager, not caring to decide between the claims of their different schools, but ready to learn from any of them if they warned him of any insincerity into which he was likely to fall, or showed him a better way than he knew of improving his character and shaping his actions. Philosophy was never an excuse to him for avoiding troublesome business; he denounces in words that make many of us quiver the disposition which private men, as much as Emperors, feel not to answer letters, or to keep suitors waiting. He had a conscience of the bondage into which we bring ourselves by the neglect of little things; he would have accepted those grand words of our poet in his ode to Duty, which recognise all freedom and all joy as springing from submission to its commands.

The philosophers of his court.

His care for little things.

And of Marcus Aurelius it is as true as of Epictetus, that he did not depend upon himself for protection against the slavery of which he was conscious, or for attainment of the freedom of which he was conscious. He spoke as Epictetus had spoken, of a God near him, a God within him, who was watching over him, and to whom he must have recourse if he wished to live a true life. He might sometimes call the true life, a life

His submission to divine rule.

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according to Nature, as Butler does, but it was this Lord and teacher of himself, not some external power, in whom he trusted to make such a life possible for him. Marcus, however, it must be remembered, was not merely the ruler of himself. He was the ruler of a people in whom faith and reverence were fast disappearing, on whom the traditions of their land were losing their hold, whom he saw no way of imbuing with his higher convictions. What should he do to keep the people straight, to prevent them from sinking lower? How could he sustain that which was perishing in them? Must he not use the powers which had been committed to him to punish any who induced them to distrust their old divinity? These reflections led Marcus to acts of which I may speak presently, acts in which he has had many imitators among those who have not generally taken him as a model.

The Roman faith in it vanishing.

His dread of any who might enfeeble it further.

Slavery to unseen powers.

(3) There is another kind of slavery to which men are liable, besides that to Pleasure or to Society, one which may be combined with either or both of these. They may dread the caprice and cruelty of unseen powers which demand such sacrifices as those of Iphigenia. The Conscience of liberty which comes from trust in a Being who is not capricious and cruel, who is emphatically a Deliverer, was that which gave all the emphasis to the 'I ought' and the 'I ought not' of the Christian witness under the Roman Empire. 'I ought not to bow before this demon. I ought not 'to sacrifice to the image of the Divus Imperator'— that was his formula. The formula became real for him, it issued in martyrdom, when he could say, 'I do 'not reject a faith, but an unbelief. I do not set up 'a God for myself. I cling to the God who is the

The martyr's defiance of them.

'Deliverer of my race.' When the Christian's profession was merely the assertion of an opinion—formed after weighing the probabilities for or against it—there was no strength in him for any martyrdom. What did ignorant men and weak women understand about probabilities? Wiser men could overthrow any probabilities with their scorn or their stakes. But if there had come to the Conscience the certainty of an actual Deliverer, then the threefold cord of immediate punishment, of loathing by Society, of threatened vengeance hereafter, could be rent in pieces by the feeblest. If you read Opinion for Conscience, you change the history of that age and of all subsequent ages.

He did not die for a probability.

At this point I may pass without effort, from the inverted phrase which I have adopted, to the old phrase Liberty of Conscience, which I said I should be most sorry to lose. What I hope you will have learnt is, that this last phrase *cannot* bear some senses which loose thinkers attach to it. (1) Liberty of Conscience cannot mean liberty to *do* what I like. That we have seen, in the judgment of the wisest men, of those who speak most from experience, is bondage. It is from my likings that I must be emancipated if I would be a freeman. (2) It cannot mean liberty to *think* what I choose. Such men as Marcus Aurelius discovered the slavery which came from thinking what they chose, the necessity of bringing their thoughts under government lest they should become their oppressors. Every teacher of physical Science, here or elsewhere, repeats the same lesson. The scientific man bids us seek the thing as it is. He tells us that we are always in danger of putting our

What Liberty of Conscience cannot be.

No right to do or think as we like.

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thoughts or conceptions of the thing between us and that which is. He gives us a discipline for our thoughts that they may not pervert the facts which we are examining. From not heeding this discipline men assumed that the Sun must travel round the Earth, because it appeared the most natural thing to them that it should, the most strange thing that it should not. If Galileo (according to the old tradition) said, 'And yet the earth does move,' he said, 'Neither 'my thoughts nor the thoughts of all the doctors and 'priests that live now or ever have lived can the least 'alter facts. You have no right, I have no right, to 'determine what is. All our determinations must fall 'before the truth when that is discovered to us.' (3) So again Liberty of Conscience cannot be a gift which men are to ask of Senates or Sanhedrims or Assemblies of the people. They have it not to bestow; if they had, no one could receive it from them. Those who groan because any of these bodies withhold it from them have not yet learnt what it is. The slave Epictetus would shew them that it could not be kept by mere external force from any one.

Galileo a protestant against his own judgment as well as the Pope's.

Liberty of Conscience not obtained by votes in Parliament.

But when we have got rid of these confused notions which have fastened themselves to the cry for Liberty of Conscience, there remains a most wholesome and indispensable protest in it to which no Statesmen or Churchmen or Philosophers can be indifferent, except at their great peril. The opinion has prevailed among all three, that the Conscience is a troublesome disturber of the peace, which it may be necessary to endure but which it would be very desirable to silence. So long as that doctrine prevails, so long as any fragment or shred of it remains in our minds, we may talk

What it is.

Jealousy of the Conscience amongst Statesmen and Churchmen.

about persecution as much as we please; we may boast of our age for having discovered the inutility of persecution; but we shall, under one pretext or other, persecute. The most ingenious political, ecclesiastical, philosophical excuses will always be ready to prove that the particular persecution we are practising deserves another name and belongs to a class of acts altogether different from that which we denounce in other countries, or in former days. What satisfactory demonstrations there will be that we are really vindicating toleration when we are most intolerant, that we are not interfering with a man's belief, but only with his desire to crush ours! Therefore I deem it needful to proclaim that in every instance to which we can point, a Society which has succeeded in choking or weakening the Conscience of any of its members has undermined its own existence, and that the defeat of such experiments has been the preservation and security of the Society that has attempted them. The banishment of the Moors from Spain helped to turn a chivalrous and Christian nation into an ambitious, gold-worshipping, tyrannical nation. Philip II. resolved that the consciences of his Protestant subjects in Spain and in Holland should be crushed. He succeeded in the first case, and the greatest nation in Europe sunk to a third-rate power. He was defeated in the other, and Holland, from an insignificant province, became a people. Louis XIV. was cursed with success in his dealings with Jansenists and Protestants during the next century. He enfeebled and impoverished his land, and prepared a revolution for his successors. His disciples, the Stuarts, sought to extinguish the Puritans and Covenanters in England and Scotland; we owe any

The philosophical recognition of it very precarious.

Punishment of Rulers who have succeeded in coercing the Conscience.

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vigour which there is in Great Britain to their failure. These are the commonplaces of history. Often as they have been repeated, we have need to consider them again, and to lay them to heart; they contain lessons which are never obsolete for one set of men or another. Each Sect and School in the day of its adversity bears a grand witness on behalf of the Conscience. Each Sect and School in the day of its prosperity glorifies its own thoughts and opinions, and instead of appealing to the Conscience in its members tries to silence it. They are punished by an increase of the strifes and divisions which they hope to extinguish; they lose their convictions in the vehemence with which they talk of them.

Punishment of Sects.

So again in respect to Science. It is no doubt true that a man who follows his own notions and vagaries may be as far from the laws of the universe as the man who accepts all the traditions of other days. But those who, under pretence of hindering notions and vagaries, try in any degree to forbid or discourage the exercise of men's thoughts in reference to these laws, are labouring that they may be always hidden. The laws may reveal themselves to any seeker if he be ever so blundering a one. They will not reveal themselves to any one who is content with his own opinions, and does not wish to change them for truth. It is a reasonable assertion that any man who interferes with these investigations, is an enemy of the Liberty of Conscience. He wishes that men should affirm something which the Conscience in them says that they ought not to affirm or to deny something which the Conscience in them says they ought not to deny.

War against Science.

Why it is a war against Conscience.

Mill on liberty.

A philosophical protest on behalf of Liberty has

appeared in our days from Mr Mill. Some of you will have read it; those who have must have appreciated its power and its earnestness. I hold it to be a valuable testimony against certain opinions which are prevalent among philosophers; especially among those who worship Society as the supreme Divinity. It is no less important as a warning against a tendency which exists among those who are not philosophers to make uniformity in practice or in opinion the great object of their ambition. I do not doubt with Mr Mill that diversities, even eccentricities, are much better than the dead level from which all inequalities are removed, than the desert which some would create under pretence of making peace. But I would warn you that the Liberty we have been speaking of to-day, the liberty which Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius sought, is far remote from eccentricity. They did not care to be different in their ways from other men; they would rather be like their fellows. They refused to be the slaves of the fashions and habits of their time, or of any time; but since there must be fashions and habits they would rather take what they found than change them for others which in themselves were equally unimportant. A man may make himself a slave by adopting the modes of some other time and country, or by devising new modes of his own, as well as by copying all that he sees about him. And so as to acts. The supporters of some faction may fancy they are asserting their liberty by claiming their right to bite their thumbs because their opponents defy them to do it. The man who understands what Liberty of Conscience is will tell himself that he has no right to bite his thumb; that he is yielding to one of his own whims and fancies in such

Value of this Treatise.

Liberty not to be confounded with Eccentricity.

Temptation to confound them.

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biting; and that whims and fancies are mischievous tyrants. I do not believe that Mr Mill meant to confound Liberty with the right to be peculiar. I am sure he has a sense of its grandeur which would make such a definition of it quite intolerable to him. But there are passages in the Essay which are open to that interpretation. And since some who do not love Liberty may be glad that it should be so represented, and some may be even ready to accept this poor and withered shadow of it in place of the substance, I have desired that the slander should not even seem to have the countenance of so high an authority.

Marcus Aurelius an invader of the Liberty of Conscience.

I had another reason for referring to this remarkable Essay. In the course of it Mr Mill alludes to the Emperor Marcus, and confirms, in much better language, the opinion which I have expressed about him. But he fills up a blank which I had left. "Marcus Aure-

Mill on Liberty, p. 50.

"lius, the gentlest and most amiable of philosophers "and rulers, under a solemn sense of duty, authorised "the persecution of Christians. To my mind," adds Mr Mill, "this is one of the most tragical facts in all history. "It is a bitter thought how different the Christianity of "the world might have been if it had been adopted as "the religion of the Empire, under the auspices of "Marcus Aurelius, instead of those of Constantine." To the lamentation and the wish contained in these last sentences I do not in the least subscribe. I believe that Christianity would not have been the least better for being taken under the patronage of this good Prince. I believe it proved its vital strength much more by evoking his hostility. I do not imagine that its professors would have been free from any of the sins into which they fell, or would have been more faithful to their

Would Christians have been better for his patronage?

principles, if they had passed through the trial of alliance with a doomed Empire—a far greater trial than any persecution—in his days rather than in the days of Constantine. But the other part of the paragraph belongs to facts and not to speculation. There is no doubt that the gentlest of philosophers and rulers authorised the persecution of Christians, and authorised it from a solemn sense of duty. He believed that he was doing his duty as a ruler by keeping alive the reverence of his subjects. He believed he was doing his duty as a philosopher by putting down men who, as he thought, mimicked the endurance of pain which belonged to philosophy without entering into its principles. And when Mr Mill goes on to press the moral upon Christians that they cannot be sure they are doing right in persecuting any form of infidelity, if they hold Marcus to have been utterly wrong in persecuting that which he deemed infidelity, I should only complain of the charge for its inadequacy and feebleness. I am not the judge either of him or of the Christians who have followed in his steps. But there were excuses for him which it would be impossible to plead for them. If we believe that the Redeemer of the Conscience has come, what is any attempt to corrupt it or stifle it but an act of direct treason against Him?

His motives for persecution

far better than any which we can allege.

LECTURE VII.

THE SUPREMACY OF CONSCIENCE.

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The claim of Butler for the Conscience.

I HAVE spoken to you about the Liberty of Conscience. Butler appears to demand for it much more than Liberty. He claims for it Supremacy.

Second Sermon on Human Nature.

The phrase is not used carelessly. It occurs frequently in the Discourses on Human Nature. What value the writer of them attached to it you may guess from these sentences. 'You cannot form a notion of 'the faculty Conscience, without taking in judgment, 'direction, superintendency. This is a constituent part 'of the idea; that is of the faculty itself; and to pre-'side and govern, from the very economy and constitu-'tion of man, belongs to it. Had it strength as it has 'right; had it power as it has manifest authority, it 'would absolutely govern the world.'

Dr Whewell's demurrer.

This strong language proceeds from a man who had an instinctive dislike of rhetorical exaggerations; who was cautious, even to excess. If he had found any more moderate words which would have expressed his meaning, we may be sure he would have preferred them. Nevertheless Dr Whewell, when he was sending forth the Discourses as a text-book for our use, showed an impatience of this language. He quoted other

passages from Butler, which might be taken as modifying it; according to him we have no need to construe it literally.

Butler would not have admitted it.

It may be true that Butler did not frequently speak of the conscience as having a 'right to govern the 'world.' He could scarcely sustain his speech on such a level; his voice must often have fallen into a lower key. But I cannot believe that he would ever have consented to soften words which were uttered with such solemnity and deliberation; what he said was implied in the very idea of the Conscience he must have ascribed to it habitually; otherwise he would have retracted not a few sentences, but his whole treatise.

Can we?

So far as Dr Whewell attempted to empty Butler's doctrine of its *force*, I think he failed: but he may help us to perceive wherein it is *weak;* what there is in it which is inconsistent with the idea of the Conscience; what there is in it which prevents us from recognising the highest function of the Conscience. The education of Dr Whewell was altogether different from that of Butler; it may have enabled him to recognise some of our necessities to which his predecessor was less alive.

The searcher for Laws in Nature recognises Laws among men.

Any one who reads Dr Whewell's Moral Treatises will be aware of the importance which he attached to Laws; to laws in their simplest sense as enforced by particular nations on their own subjects. Bringing to the study of the 'microcosm, the little world of man,' the habits which he had acquired while studying 'the macrocosm, the great world of Nature,' he must have sought for all signs and vestiges of an order in human existence. He might have imagined a possible savage, or tried to discover the condition of an actual savage. But the facts which lay before him—those which di-

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rectly concerned his own life and the life of his neighbours—surely deserved his first attention. Amongst these none was more obvious, none was more wonderful than this, that men obey laws, laws which they did not create, laws which they speak of as having come down to them from ancestors, laws which they associate with the existence of the body whereof they are members. With these Laws, Dr Whewell perceived that the words Right and Wrong become inseparably blended; they assume to be the preservers of Right, the protectors against Wrong. So earnestly did he dwell upon this observation, that he was accused of making morality dependent upon positive Laws though they are subject to continual changes. He repelled the charge indignantly. The Laws, he said, pointed to a Right which they did not make, to a Wrong which it was not in their power to put down. It was the business of the Moralist to search for the radical meaning of the distinction which they indicated. While some discovered in the varieties of local laws an evidence that there is no fixed standard of Right and Wrong, Dr Whewell looked upon their varieties and imperfections as witnesses that there must be such a standard.

Are Laws the ground of Right and Wrong?

Or the witnesses of Right and Wrong?

Butler had always been occupied with the microcosm. He only contemplated the macrocosm in reference to that. The arrangements of the outward world were profoundly interesting to him, but interesting as instruments for the discipline and education of men. That he should have recognised an Order in this sphere as real as that which men of Science had perceived in the other, was a bond between him and Dr Whewell. Butler could be hailed as a witness for fixed Laws. But when he began to talk of a tribunal within

Dr Whewell's sympathy with Butler.

a man which might,—so he seemed to affirm,—reverse any decrees that had not issued from it, we cannot wonder that his admirer should have felt considerable alarm. Could the Conscience claim an authority above and against laws? Would not such a pretension, besides interfering with their dominion, interfere with the fixed standard of Right which was implied in them? Might not the Conscience boast that it was itself the creator of the Right?

Revulsion from him.

These were not fantastic dangers; language had been used, acts had been done, which evidently assumed for the Conscience a supremacy as complete, as irresponsible as this. I apprehend Dr Whewell did good service in warning us of the peril; I am not equally sure that he discovered the way of avoiding it. That way I would now endeavour to seek, not trusting at all to my own wisdom, but profiting as much as possible by the lights which both these teachers afford for our guidance.

Object of this Lecture.

You may remember that in my last Lecture I proposed a change in a customary form of speech. For 'Liberty of Conscience,' I read 'Conscience of Liberty.' I explained my reasons for the inversion. I did not wish to deprive the phrase of its old force, but rather to recover that force by stripping it of some confused notions which had attached themselves to it. Above all, I wished to give the word *Conscience* its original import, to restore that link between it and consciousness, which is almost inevitably severed when it is treated as a faculty of Human Nature. If I make the same experiment on the term which we are now considering, I shall not be doing violence to one which has acquired a traditional and popular sacredness; I shall

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be dealing with the phrase of a particular writer, whose courage and independence of thought teach us that we shall often honour him most when we depart from his rubric. In this case I am less scrupulous, because I am convinced that the change of expression may not only be the means of reconciling him with the most eminent of his Commentators, but of justifying what sounds inflated and outrageous in his own statement.

Reason for such an expression.

'The Conscience of Supremacy' may seem to be no substitute for the 'Supremacy of Conscience,' but the very opposite of it. Nevertheless it may show us *what* 'judgment, direction, superintendency is involved in the 'very idea of the conscience,' in *what* sense 'it may have 'a right to govern the world.'

Conscience and Law, their relation to each other.

When I spoke to you of the discipline which was suggested by a distinguished writer of our day for implanting 'the sentiment of the forbidden' in children, that they might as men become the dutiful servants of a majority, I urged that such a scheme, if it were successful (and there were too many instances of its success to warrant us in speaking lightly of it) would destroy a Conscience, supposing it be that which has borne the name among men hitherto, that which has sustained any great cause or defied any oppression. I added, that the sentiment of which Mr Bain speaks, often leads to a transgression of the general *laws* of the land. I instanced the case of Contracts respecting Property. The Laws enforce these. It is admitted that they are for the interest of Society. But there are not only temptations in men to break them for the sake of their own immediate advantage; there is a social opinion,—it may dwell in a union of workmen, of tradesmen, or of Nobles,—which is more mighty than any distant

terrors, such as the legislation of the country may have devised to sustain its own decrees.

Reference to a former Lecture.

The instances to which I alluded are notorious; they belong to a high stage of civilization—to a country where a philosophy like that of Mr Bain is much esteemed and reckoned a faithful summary of admitted popular maxims. They lead us to ask ourselves these questions. May not this Conscience, which has been regarded with so much suspicion by Law-givers, be in truth the great bulwark of Law? Need its strength be abated that the strength of the Law may be increased? Will not the strength of one be greatest when the strength of the other is greatest? Do not Laws call forth the Conscience; when that has acquired the utmost superiority which can be claimed for it, is there not the greatest, the only, security that Law will be reverenced?

It is this doctrine which I desire to enforce upon you. If you fully receive it, you will not wish to cripple Butler's language by qualifications and evasions, yet you will pay the fullest and most grateful respect to the protest of Dr Whewell.

When Law begins to assert itself.

1. I would appeal first to your own experience. Schoolmasters, says an old poet, deliver us to Laws. In the nursery we are acquiring among other sentiments 'the sentiment of the forbidden,' either according to Mr Bain's plan, by trembling at the rod which will descend on us if we do what we are told not to do, and so contracting a dread of the person who wields the rod; or, as I have maintained, by discovering that the forbidder is wiser than we are and cares to save us from the injuries that we should do to ourselves by following our own likings. Of course there are irregularities and

Not in the family.

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caprices in all mortal discipline. The two maxims may be often mixed together. He who most tries to act on the one may drop through passion into the other. But I believe many a man can say, 'Whatever true sentiment of the forbidden I have, whatever in me is not crouching but manly and erect, was nurtured by this fatherly treatment. God be thanked for that.' Still this was not Law. The apprehension of *that* arises when we are introduced into a Society consisting of boys each with a desire for independence, each with a sense of bodily energies corresponding to this desire, each with tendencies which may lead to mere savagery; yet each capable of understanding that he has relations to his fellows, each capable of saying, I ought to do this, I ought not to do that. To bring forth this conviction in its full force is the function of the Schoolmaster. Many in our day have clearly understood that it is their function. The difference between them and some of their predecessors is, not that they enforce laws less strictly, not that they tolerate the breaking of them under any circumstances, but that they appeal to something in the boy which recognises the worth of laws; to that in him which confesses punishment to be directed against acts of his which are wrong. The Schoolmaster of this age owes his nobleness not to his invention of new Canons, but to his vindication of those old simple maxims which had been exchanged in the practice of the last generation for the more refined principles of conduct that Mr Bain has so ably illustrated and defended.

Office of the Schoolmaster.

The Schoolmaster of the last age acted on the maxims of modern wisdom.

2. All School discipline points in the same direction. We learn the rules of grammar. They are learnt out of a book. There is a list of exceptions to them.

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The teaching of grammatical Laws.

But they remind us of laws to which speech must conform itself, laws that must somehow account for the exceptions. They say to each of us, Thou, if thou speakest, and wouldest make thyself intelligible, must speak according to a Law. And we are taught this lesson not that we may be hindered from uttering ourselves freely, distinctly, each saying what he has to say, but that we may do this. We are shewn by exercises in writing how the words must follow each other to make sense. If we do not care to speak or write, the laws will never explain themselves to us. It is always the same. The Law demands individual energy to fulfil it. The more the individual energy is awakened, the more it recognises its need of a Law.

Use of the old languages.

3. In general we get this instruction respecting the laws of speech and of writing mainly from two languages which we do not speak and write commonly; which we do not use to express our ordinary wants. So we are reminded, first, that there is a variety in the laws of speech; that Greeks had forms of speech which Latins had not; that both had forms of speech which we have not; secondly, that there are laws of speech to which Greek, Latin, and English must all conform themselves; thirdly, that these laws do not affect the things which are spoken of, but govern those who speak. We are recalled, as I said before, all study of language must recall us, to the I. The more general the laws are, the more they suggest the individual.

History; why civilized men are more interesting than barbarians.

4. So we are prepared for the study of the most obvious and striking facts in the history of the peoples whose languages have occupied us. Why should you read about Greeks or Romans more than about any barbarous tribes? Find distinct men among the bar-

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barous tribes, men who can express themselves, and they become as interesting to us as any of their conquerors. A Caractacus or a Galgacus is more dear to us than a Suetonius Paullinus, perhaps than an Agricola. But we must get a Tacitus to tell us of a Caractacus or a Galgacus. They stand out clear and brilliant figures before us, because the Roman historian has recognised them as such. And how does he differ from the countrymen of Caractacus or Galgacus? He has learnt the worth of Laws, he belongs to a law-governed people. The Savages form a horde, out of which a living form, an actual I, starts up ever and anon to remind us what the horde consists of, what each element in it ought to be. But of nations which recognise Laws, it is the characteristic that they are composed of I's; that is to say, the Laws have awakened the Conscience, and the Conscience being awakened owns the majesty of Laws. So we are reconciled to the triumph of Romans over Britons. We do not give up our reverence for national life; we do not worship the force of arms. But we perceive that a true national life could only be called forth, could only be sustained, by Laws; we are sure that when it has been called forth, the Laws will be respected more than the force which has been the instrument of establishing them.

Reverence for national life implies reverence for Laws.

5. Greek history tells you the same lesson, and also another which much concerns our subject. You find, among the Greek tribes, the greatest esteem for Legislators; all the greatest men they have dreamt of in the ages which are not historical or known in those that are belong to this class. That they feel to be one of their distinctions from the barbarians. Their freedom is the other. The Savage, they say, is not a

Sparta and Athens.

Law and Freedom.

free man, not a citizen. But there is the greatest difference in the characters of the different States. The predominant thought in Sparta is subjection to the Laws. It is the glory of Leonidas, and those who fall with him, that they die in obedience to the laws. The predominant thought in Athens is personal liberty. The Spartan welcomes that which he finds, that which he has inherited, that which is laid down for him. The Athenian always likes to think that he has a share in making the laws which bind him. Each State is in continual danger of perishing, through rigid formality or through restlessness. But neither does perish till the reverence for Law is lost, or almost lost, in a dread of power of some kind or other; when that becomes supreme, the *nation* ceases to exist. Thus we come to understand that there are distinct laws which influence the conduct as there are distinct laws which direct the speech of different races; but that there is a homage to Law, as such, lying beneath the respect for particular laws, springing out of that which is in all races. That is what I have called the Conscience. It must have a Law. It recognises the appropriateness of different laws in different places; the Spartan's 'I ought' may not be the Athenian's 'I ought.' But there is an 'I ought' for the Spartan and the Athenian also; if that is not confessed there will be no subjection to any laws, local or general—only anarchy, and with anarchy the extinction of that sense of individual existence which seems to have produced it.

They seem opposed, but they perish together.

The Jewish Law.

6. Hence we are led to notice a fact which is brought out in your home and your school experience; one which no observer of the modern world can overlook. Along with those laws of Lacedæmon, Athens, and Rome,

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which form so conspicuous a subject in our classical studies, there come before us the ten Commandments which were given to the Jews. These, like the others, belong to a peculiar nation; they are the groundwork of Statutes which we believe to have been abrogated for us. How have these survived? Why do parents in the furthest west, in the most cultivated times, teach them to their children? How have they established themselves among nations each having a code of its own? They prohibit acts to which the inhabitants of those nations were and are addicted. They were handed down by a people whom these nations hated, whom they were taught by their priests to hate. Their priests would fain have persuaded them that their own authority was higher than the authority of these laws, that they could set aside some, dispense with others. It is clear that no arguments about the authenticity of documents can have had the slightest weight with the tribes which accepted this Code, can never have been the least intelligible to them. How then can we account for their general diffusion, for their general adoption, in spite of the influence of religious teachers who would have much preferred to substitute their own numerous rules, in spite of the contempt of sages, scandalized that an ignorant people in Palestine should have become lawgivers to the world? I shall say nothing here about the history of this Code or the sanction of it. But it belongs to our present subject to remark that the command, 'Thou shalt not,' would have been uttered in vain, if there had not been called forth an 'I ought not' in the hearer; that when these two meet together the decrees or indulgences of Sovereigns or of Priests prove feeble against them. And

Its power over the Western Nations.

Opposition to it from Priests and Philosophers.

this too must be noticed, that the claim of the Conscience to Liberty is recognised in the very first words of this Code; that every article of it is associated with deliverance from bondage. The Conscience of men has, I believe, testified to this union, has owned that Slavery is inevitable for me while I am under the yoke of my own appetites and inclinations, that the Law which forbids me to serve these points to the highest freedom if it cannot confer the freedom; points to a 'direction, superintendency, judgment,' in which lies the very secret both of obedience and freedom.

Secret of its triumph.

7. I alluded to this subject before when I commented on some remarkable words of Taylor respecting Charles II. *Custos utriusque Tabulæ* was the title which he bestowed on that monarch in addition to his authority over England, France, and Ireland, and his claim to be defender of the Faith. I was obliged to observe that he broke both the Tables of which he was the guardian, and taught his subjects to do the same. And yet no one sanctioned so many acts which tended to bind the Consciences of his subjects. His own indolent disposition assuredly would not have prompted such acts; he desired indulgence from others and would have granted it to others. But indulgence and tyranny are linked closely together; reverence for law is the only protection of reverence for Conscience. Charles could not reverence the last in himself or in his subjects because he did not reverence the first. I do not say the same of those ecclesiastics who urged him to enforce restraints upon the Puritans of England or the Covenanters of Scotland. They had a confused notion that they paid honour to the fixedness and uniformity of Laws by not suffering diversities of Opinion. Their

The enemy of Law the enemy of Conscience.

The suicidal maxims of English ecclesiastics.

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mistake was that terrible one of which I spoke in my last Lecture, the identification of Conscience with Opinion. But this mistake was as fatal to the claims of Law upon obedience as it was to the dignity of the Conscience itself. If the Conscience is one with Opinion, the moment our opinion runs contrary to any law,—the moment we think it may be advantageously altered —we shall set it at nought. Whereas the Conscience having a profound reverence for Law as Law, turning to it for a protection against mere opinion, will rather incur any punishment than trifle with its authority. Law carries with it for the Conscience a witness of divinity even when those who administer it have become devilish. Those lawgivers therefore who would weaken the Conscience cut away from under them the ground on which security for Law must rest, just as the ecclesiastics who would crush it deliberately destroy the greatest witness for the direction, superintendency, judgment of a righteous God. I accept the testimony of Butler to the supremacy of the Conscience, notwithstanding what I take to be the imperfection of his language, as a grand recantation and repudiation, from an illustrious divine of the English Church who was to become one of its Bishops, of all those apologies for restraints upon the Conscience which members of his Communion had put forward in former days; a protest against all similar apologies which should be devised in the times to come. His language about the Conscience is as different from Taylor's as can be. One would fence it with rules; the other appears to assert for it a strange independence of rules. But Taylor had partially anticipated Butler's claim in his Liberty of Prophesying, had even drawn conclusions from it to which

Conscience the defence of Law against Opinion.

Butler a true Protestant against the oppressors of Conscience.

The Liberty of Prophesying.

Butler might have demurred. And they like Butler and Dr Whewell need not be at issue if we exchange Rules for Laws, and if we suppose the Conscience of Laws to involve the Conscience of Supremacy in an essentially righteous Lawgiver.

8. Do not suppose that by the Conscience of such a supremacy I mean the general recognition of a Supreme Power existing somewhere to whom the world is subject, and therefore to whom I as one of its inhabitants am subject. The Conscience has nothing to do with such vague and distant propositions. It is emphatically the witness of a supremacy over me directly, not over me as one of the atoms of which the world is composed. I do not proceed from the world to myself; but from myself to the world; I know of its governor only so far as I know of mine. Nor do I begin from the acknowledgment of a Power who *as a Power* governs me. In Butler's bold language I own only one who has a *Right* to govern. The Conscience takes no account of Power except as it is joined to Right, except as it has its ground in Right. The very business and function of the Conscience is to disclaim and repudiate any other, to say that it will serve no other. Here is the vindication of Dr Whewell's demand for a fixed unchangeable standard of Right. He does not approach nearer to it by supposing that the Right exists somewhere else, and that the Conscience has a certain qualified or subordinate authority in affirming what it is. *Then* we may ask, as Mr Bain asks, *What* Conscience has this authority, and how much has it? But if we hold that in every man there is a Conscience of judgment, direction, superintendency, and that in every man the Conscience, so far as it testifies of this, testifies

The Conscience speaks of my Ruler.

The Conscience speaks of subjection to Right never to mere Power.

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truly—we avoid any such difficulties; the Conscience in itself has no authority; its authority begins when it goes out of itself, its supremacy consists in its abdication of supremacy.

The paradox of the Conscience.

9. That you will say is a paradox. I told you that when we begin to speak of the Conscience, we find ourselves amidst paradoxes; it is impossible to escape them except by denying the very existence of that which we are investigating. It was Butler's reluctance to face this paradox which brought him into collision with his commentator and I think into contradiction with himself. If the conscience is a *property* of mine, and if it implies judgment, superintendence, direction, I must be my own judge, superintendent, director. Then *jura nego mihi nata.* They are created by me, not for me. But if there is that in me which is higher than anything I call my own; if there is that in me which carries me beyond myself—if the Conscience is this,—then I may indeed speak loftily of it; for it testifies of every man in whom it dwells, that

The peril of regarding Conscience as my possession.

Its true glory.

Igneus est illi vigor et cœlestis origo.

He may have a clothing of earth, he may have wrapped himself closely in it. But there is in him a fire which the earth did not kindle, there are the signs of a parentage which must be divine.

10. And yet it is here that one finds a justification for the very hardest epithets that have ever been bestowed on the Conscience. Butler, as I hinted before, appears not to recognise the truth of these epithets; he would scarcely have liked to speak of a corrupt or evil Conscience. But no theory of his or of any man can undo the facts to which these adjectives point; the truth

Its liability to debasement.

which any theory contains will be disbelieved and will be inoperative, if justice is not done to them. Once admit that the Conscience is that in a man which points to what is above him, which declares the supremacy of a right that he did not mould and cannot alter, and the meaning of these expressions becomes frightfully evident. Disavowing this supremacy, I become what is so pathetically expressed in a line of Byron's *Lara:*

> Lord of myself, that heritage of woe.

Heights and Depths.

The more there is of Conscience in me—the more I confess a higher law—the greater will be my degradation and the sense of it. And as the depth of this degradation is measured by the elevation of which I have the Conscience, so all those pettier and more ignominious forms of self-consciousness to which I adverted in my first lecture,—all the tricks of vanity which may make us laugh or weep when we recollect them in ourselves or others,—are accounted for in the same way. This self-consciousness attests the grandeur of which the man is capable, it shews that he cannot be satisfied with looking at mere things which are outside of him. But it verifies the two assertions of the poet, which often sound contradictory, that the man who is occupied with himself is occupied with the meanest of all objects in creation and yet that he is wise

Self Conceit and Self Respect.

> Who still suspects and still reveres himself
> In lowliness of heart.

11. I have touched upon the subject of the Laws of Nations solely as it bears upon the question of the Supremacy of the Conscience. Any direct treatment of that subject must be reserved for Lectures on

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The Conscience of a Nation.

Social Morality. But I cannot omit to notice a phrase which you will often hear from the wisest men and find in the best books; 'The Conscience of a Nation.' Can I accept that form of speech after taking so much pains to connect the Conscience with each man, with the word I? Most heartily do I accept it; I should regard the loss of it as an unspeakable calamity. It reminds us that the Nation is composed of I's; that therein consists its preciousness; that a Society such as Mr Bentham describes, which is 'a fictitious body composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting, as it were, its members,' is not a Nation at all. Men are not wont to live and die for an 'as it were.' The Nation for which men are content to live and die must have a Conscience; a Conscience to which each of its citizens feels that an appeal can be made, a Conscience which makes it capable of evil acts; a Conscience which gives it a permanence from age to age. Leave fictions to the philosophers who care for them; let every one of us claim his place as the citizen of a real Nation, real because it has a Conscience. And let me conjure every one of you who may hereafter have the opportunity of speaking to men as a divine, an advocate or a legislator, every one who possesses any gift or faculty of addressing multitudes, to beware how he uses this opportunity and that faculty. It is no trifle to speak to the Conscience of any body of men. You may raise it or you may corrupt it. You may turn your countrymen—any of them, rich or poor—into a base mob, you may exalt them into citizens. Think of the great men who have set the last object before them. The curse of God is upon those who pursue the other.

Does it interfere with the individual Conscience?

True and false Prophets.

What each may do.

12. In this union of the Nation with the Individual one of the deep mysteries of the Conscience is involved. The might of Law is that it speaks to a whole body; that it addresses each member of that body as a Thou. The might of Law and also the terror of Law is there. Many a man would be glad to escape from 'the sentiment of the forbidden' which it creates, to that sentiment of the forbidden which is merely a shrinking from the lash. The Israelites were faithful specimens of our race when they longed to exchange the dreariness of a wilderness with subjection to a Law, for the flesh-pots of Egypt with its task-masters. That change is not possible for any one who is a citizen or is to become a citizen. He is brought face to face with a Law; his acts are tried by a Law; if it condemns any acts in a neighbour it condemns the same in him. As he approaches the inner sanctuary in which his thoughts and purposes dwell, he is startled by finding that there is a Law over them also; nay, is it not the highest Law, is it not that which speaks directly of wrong, which says, Thou art wrong? Here is the penalty of having a Conscience, of being under a Law, of not being a brute. A penalty which is far more terrible than all which the Legislature can inflict for the violation of the Law; who might not be glad to commute the Conscience of wrong and guilt for the worst of these?

The fearfulness of a Law.

The Law within.

Refuge from the sense of Wrong in Animalism.

But the Conscience of Wrong implies a Conscience of Right. The Law must have come from one who is Right, from one who must be the enemy of Wrong. Is not the enemy of Wrong the Deliverer from Wrong? The Law looked at as a mere code of letters, fixed and irrevocable, is a chain upon a man which he

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Refuge from the sense of Wrong in the belief of Right.

would give worlds to break but which winds itself ever more closely about him because he has a Conscience. The Law contemplated as expressing the righteous mind of the Lawgiver, speaks to the Conscience of the liberty which it craves. It recognises Law and Liberty as essentially united. Its freedom consists in its obedience—not to Decrees or Statutes, not to a Society, but—to a Being who is right and seeks to make it right.

Thus Right and Wrong become ultimate distinctions which can be resolved into no others. There is a deep truth in the claim of Supremacy for the Conscience. There is a deep truth in the protest on behalf of Law against any supremacy in a man which interferes with its supremacy. Both together lead us to the question, 'Good or Evil, which of them 'is supreme, which of them is at last to govern me and 'the world?'

LECTURE VIII.

THE EDUCATION OF THE CONSCIENCE.

I HAVE given some hints in several of my Lectures, especially in the last, about the influence which the Education of the Nursery and of the School may have in crushing or in awakening the Conscience. Two questions I think must have occurred to you in reference to this subject. Both concern you and me greatly. The first is *Quis custodit ipsos custodes?* Is there any Guide for the Parent and the Schoolmaster who may teach them not to destroy that which it is their function to cultivate and preserve? Philosophers it seems may furnish them with ingenious receipts for stifling the Conscience. Divines and Casuists have written long tomes which, if we may believe so fair a witness as Jeremy Taylor, utterly bewilder it. Supposing these are the ultimate rulers of the Conscience, what chance is there that it will retain any freedom,—any mastery over the inclinations which rise up against it? The second question is this—'Under what guidance do we fall when we are loose from the control of parents and schoolmasters?' Can the discipline of what Mr Bain calls 'Society' be trusted then? Will that take care of the Con-

Who teaches Teachers?

Who takes the command of us when we are left to choose for ourselves?

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science with which you have said it is so often called to do battle?

These are questions which men have been compelled to ask themselves in all times. It appears to me that those have been the wisest and truest who have asked them most earnestly, who have been most resolute not to go without an answer. I spoke in my first Lecture of Socrates. I regarded him as the philosopher who had least cared to invent a System in which he could himself repose, or which he could transmit to disciples; who had most care to pursue the enquiry 'What am I?' who had most stimulated disciples to enter upon that enquiry. In pursuing our studies respecting the Conscience I have been drawn away from him to teachers of our own country who have undertaken to illustrate its operations and its history. I come back to him because I think he has something to tell us which they have not told us; nay, which their very eagerness to glorify the Conscience and assign it independent powers had prevented them from telling us. To explain what I mean I must turn from later interpreters of Socrates, whether they have admired or disparaged him, to the testimonies of those who experienced the effects of his lessons upon themselves, who knew best what had inspired his enemies with their dislike to him, and given them an excuse for condemning him. Upon these subjects the evidence of Xenophon is most explicit. He speaks with the affection of a friend, with the frankness of a soldier.

Recurrence to Socrates.

Testimony of Xenophon.

I shall not require you to dive far into his *Memorabilia*, or to accept any opinions of mine as to the force of his words. Open the first pages of his

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He accepts the Dæmon as implied in the life and lessons of Socrates.

book; read them as simply as they are written. They refer to the Dæmon who, as Socrates declared, was the Guide of his thoughts and his acts. Xenophon had every temptation to avoid this topic. He might have explained away the language of his master, as many have done subsequently. He might have said that it did not affect his judgment on other questions, that he was a great practical moralist in spite of what he dreamed about an invisible director. He takes no such course. He introduces the Dæmon to us at once. He does not pretend to account for any part of the doctrine or life of Socrates without it. He had heard him continually speak of such a Guide and Reprover, who checked him when he was choosing any crooked path, who gave him hints and intimations of the road which he ought to choose. Xenophon had never known him tell a lie. He must have been a confirmed liar if he uttered these words, so deliberately, so habitually, without meaning them. His pupil had not found him yielding to fancies; Socrates affirmed that he was hindered from yielding to them by these admonitions. Xenophon must give up all faith in him if he counted him a deceiver or a victim of self-deception in such professions.

Was that a concession to popular opinion?

You will say that Xenophon, as well as Socrates, accepted the traditional belief of his countrymen, and that this was but an article of their traditional belief. Look at the passage to which I am referring before you adopt that interpretation of it. You will find that the author of the *Memorabilia* treats the acknowledgment of the Dæmon as the main offence which had led to the charge against Socrates; the charge of *outraging* the traditional opinions of his

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Or a defiance of it?

countrymen. He had brought in new Dæmons. Xenophon assumes, with obvious reasonableness—even if we are not bound to admit so well-informed a contemporary as able to speak positively—that his accusers meant *this* Dæmon; and that the Judges condemned him because his allusions to one who was always near him were so notorious. Undoubtedly there was added to this count of the indictment the other, that he was corrupting the minds of the youth. But what was the corruption except that he tempted them also to confess this Teacher, and so withdrew them from the objects of customary Athenian homage? He might be really more devout than most of the Athenians in the performance of the ordinary rites,—he might desire a cock to be given to Æsculapius on his death-bed; but the instinct of his judges was assuredly right. The service of such a guide as he described the Dæmon to be did interfere most dangerously with the service of the gods of nature, the gods of power and not of right, whom the rulers of Athens desired that its young men should revere.

The ground of the sentence upon Socrates.

Some have fancied that they should relieve Socrates of a stigma, and bring him more into harmony with modern opinions, if they called this Dæmon the Conscience. I trust you know enough by this time of the force which I give to the word Conscience not to suspect me of such an evasion. If Socrates had been without a Conscience he would never have acknowledged a divine Guide, as if he had been born deaf he would never have known anything of the sweetest voice; but he could no more identify the Conscience with the Guide than he could identify his hearing with the voice. He was *conscious* of one superior to him-

Learned quibbles; 'Consciousness of a Conscience.'

self who, he said, was directing him and superintending him; it would be the very outrage upon his veracity against which Xenophon protested, to suppose that he only intended to signify that he *had* a Conscience. That is a notable instance of the subterfuges by which the plain words of a great man are explained away, to the immense injury, I conceive, of the little men who invent the explanation.

Plato.

Socrates wrote no books; he lived and discoursed. But the disciple who took him for the chief speaker in his Dialogues was just as much obliged as Xenophon to recognise the Dæmon as his teacher. Plato knew that he must leave out Socrates, if he left out this conviction of his. In it lay a chief part of the influence which the great questioner had exerted over him and over the young men of Athens. And Plato could not say what he had to say except through Socrates. Putting himself for his master he would have lost that mighty power which Cicero and Augustine felt not less than the Greeks who could taste the honey as it fell from his lips. The life, the humour, the actual Plato would have gone, and nothing would have been left but the dry bones of a System called Platonism, which no mortal could believe or care for; which never had any existence but in the digest of Brucker or Tennemann.

The Dæmon in the Dialogues.

Banished to a great extent from the later schools.

It is quite true that we hear little of the Dæmon when we leave the contemporaries of Socrates, those who put him to death, and those who embalmed his memory. Aristotle talked much of the Soul, but he supposed that he might leave the enquiry 'What am I?' as one that did not require further elucidation; his vocation was to arrange studies in their relation

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Aristotle.

to each other, not to pursue this study as the central one of all. The need therefore of such a Guide may not have come very distinctly before him. Yet Aristotle, with all his love of System, was an essentially practical man; one who preserved a healthy acquaintance with the living creatures that walk the Earth, with their doings and with their needs. He must therefore have reverenced Socrates; we know that he did. He must have learned much from him. Whether he could understand what was said about the Dæmon or not, he will have respected it. Those who framed schemes of the Universe, introducing into them in place of men what could be managed much more conveniently, abstract notions—those who, if the facts did not fit conveniently into their systems, said bravely with the Abbé Raynal, 'So much the worse for them'—these have always despised Socrates as one who never could manipulate notions, and was a reckless disturber of Systems.

Ridiculous to all makers of Systems.

There is a man among the Greek Stoics whose name is chiefly familiar to us by those lines in Horace wherein he says that Homer

> ...quid sit pulchrum quid turpe quid utile quid non
> Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.

Chrysippus and Cleanthes.

Chrysippus was one of those grand System builders whom his contemporaries regarded with the profoundest admiration. They contrasted him with another of the same school, whom they described as a very lout in philosophy, an ass under panniers. His name was Cleanthes. But this despised man, instead of being commemorated in two lines, has left behind him a hymn to Jupiter. He had discovered that he needed

something else than a System of which he could boast that it had a place for everything, and that everything was in its place; that he needed one who actually knew him, and could direct him. I can never read this hymn without wonder and shame, especially these concluding lines of it.

The man who makes all things fit and the man who prays for light.

'But, O Jove, giver of all gifts, dark in thy clouds, 'ruler of the Lightning, Be pleased to deliver men from 'miserable ignorance. Scatter that, O Father, from 'the soul, grant us to inherit that understanding in the 'confidence whereof thou with right dost govern all 'things. So being honoured ourselves, we shall return 'honour to thee, Praising thy works continually as it 'becomes a mortal; seeing that there is no greater 'reward to mortals or to God than ever righteously to 'celebrate that Law which is common to both.' Think of the poor ass between panniers, finding out that his great necessity was to be delivered from his ignorance, to dwell in light instead of darkness; and that there was somewhere, whether he could name his name or not, one who could hear his cry for deliverance and for light; one whom it was the blessing of all creatures to praise and magnify, because Right dwelt in Him, because He ruled by right!

The Slave.

As we come down lower in the history, and encounter those grand figures of the Slave and the Emperor, concerning whom I spoke to you two weeks ago, we become more and more aware of the difference between the man who puts together a set of opinions which satisfies him, and which is to satisfy his disciples, and the man who is seeking a living guide for himself and so is able to point out one to them. I have told you already how impossible Epic-

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tetus found it to obtain the freedom which he deemed the great necessity for man, unless he could look up to a God, not at a distance from him, but a judge and superintendent of him, of his thoughts as well as his acts. You will scarcely realize the truth of this remark if you merely turn to the *Enchiridion*, where his doctrines are digested into short sayings, and look as if they were delivered ex cathedrâ. In the conversations which are reported by Arrian you see more into the actual struggle of the man for life, his struggle even with the opinions of the school to which he belonged when they interfered with practice. For instance. The Stoics, as you may learn from Cicero, were champions of Divination. They had their own way of explaining it. They could compel the superstitions of their people to accord with their philosophy. But they were superstitious nevertheless. Hear how Epictetus speaks on this subject. I will take Mrs Carter's version, which was made in the last century, and is apt to weaken rather than strengthen the force of the author's words on subjects of this kind. "From an "unreasonable regard to Divination we omit many "duties. For what can the Diviner see besides Death "or Dangers or Sickness or such things? When it "is necessary then to expose one's self to danger for "a Friend, or a duty to die for him, what occasion "have I for Divination? Have I not a Diviner within "who has told me the essence of Good and Evil, "and who explains to me the indications of both? "What further need have I of the entrails of Victims "or the flight of Birds? Can I bear with the other "diviner when he says, 'This is for your interest'? "For doth *he* know what is for my interest? Doth he

The battle for life raises him above his school.

What he thought of Divination.

The Diviner who guesses and the Diviner who knows.

"know what good is? Hath he learned the indica-
"tions of good and evil as he hath those of the Vic-
"tims? If so, he knows the indications likewise of
"fair and base, Just and Unjust. Do you tell me, Sir,
"what is indicated to me, Life or Death, Riches or
"Poverty? But whether those things are for my inter-
"est or not I shall not enquire of you. * * * * * What
"is it that leads so often to Divination? Cowardice;
"the dread of Events. Hence we flatter the Diviner,
"'Pray, Sir, shall I inherit my father's estate?' 'Let
"us see, let us sacrifice upon the occasion.' 'Nay, Sir,
"just as fortune pleases.' Then if he says, 'You shall
"inherit it,' we give him thanks as if we received
"the inheritance from *him*. The Consequence of this
"is that they play upon us. What then is to be done?
"We should come without previous desire or aversion;
"as a Traveller enquires the road of a Person whom
"he meets, without any desire for that which turns
"to the right hand more than to the left; for he
"wishes for neither of them; but that only which
"leads him properly. Thus we should come to God
"as a Guide. Just as we make use of other guides;
"not persuading them to show us one object rather
"than another, but receiving such as they present to
"us. But now we hold the bird with fear and trem-
"bling, and in our invocation to God entreat him—
"'Have mercy upon us; suffer me to come off safe.'
"You wretch, would you have anything then but what
"is best? And what is best but what pleases God?
"Why do you, as far as in you lies, corrupt your Judge
"and seduce your Adviser?"

The wish to be deceived.

Should we pray for good luck or for guidance into Truth?

We may take this memorable passage as explaining the meaning of all the discourses of Epictetus,

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Passage into the new world.

and the relation between his discourses and his life. It has an historical value which is greater than its biographical. It illustrates the passage from the old world into the new; it explains the demands of men which some Revelation of God must answer. If there was such a Diviner over men, as Epictetus affirmed there was, could He not show in some way to other men besides Epictetus what He was and how they might find Him?

The Emperor conversing with himself.

The evidence in the case of Marcus Aurelius is no less remarkable. His books are addressed to himself. It is with himself he carries on his Dialogues; it is himself that he warns of continual temptations to laziness, indulgence, cowardice; it is himself that he stimulates to energy and manliness. He recalls himself from speculations about the thoughts, schemes, devices of other men to take cognisance of that which is passing within him. He refers continually to a governing part in his soul, to a God or a Dæmon close to him who is able to preserve him from the influences of external things and the phantasies of his own mind. I grant you that you will often have to question yourselves whether this ruling part of the soul was to keep Marcus from falling into what was corrupt and base, or whether he was to keep it. Do not avoid that doubt; do not try to settle it by any peremptory decision. The difficulty was in the writer of the *Meditations;* the difficulty is in you. To face it is the way to be delivered from it. You will find also much in Marcus Aurelius about the 'whole' of which we form a portion; many lessons drawn from the relations which the parts bear to the 'whole.' All such passages throw light upon his character and upon

The Dæmon of Marcus Aurelius.

Does he rule it, or is he ruled by it?

his efforts to act as the Ruler of a mighty Empire ought to act. He felt the danger of forgetting his people, whilst he was thinking of himself, as well as the danger of losing himself in the multitude of things and men that were continually passing before him. The struggle to reconcile these two claims was one of the great struggles of his life; is it not in our little sphere your struggle and mine? The perplexities of this kind which an honest and serious man discovers to us, are worth far more than the most elaborate devices for concealing them, or for adjusting them. But beware of listening to any commentators or translators who try to account for them by certain tenets of the Stoics which Marcus Aurelius had embraced. You cannot read him and believe that. His tenets were webs which had spun themselves more or less closely about him. They gave him hints of certain principles which he needed for action; before he could act he had to break through them. Thus, for instance, the 27th Aphorism of his 5th Book is to this effect. "To live with the Gods is our calling. He lives "with the Gods who continually exhibits to them his "own soul, pleased with the things which are ap- "pointed for him, ready to do whatsoever that Dæmon "desires whom Jupiter hath given to each as a guide "and governor over him; which Dæmon is indeed an "offshoot from Him. And this is the Mind or Reason "of each man." It may be—as a learned Scotchman informs me who published a translation of the *Meditations* some 100 years ago, which Mr Long's must have made obsolete, if it ever had any circulation—that the Stoics conceived the divine substance to be an infinitely diffused and all-pervading Ether, and that

The man and the Statesman.

Living with the Gods.

Not dwelling among particles of Ether.

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souls were particles of this Ether, and so on. Well! I dare to say they may have had that conception and many others equally sagacious. But Marcus Aurelius was not talking about Ether; he was enquiring after a Ruler for himself. And the slightest glimpses of light which he gained about that question are worth something in this day to us, to whom his theories about Ether are worth nothing.

Plutarch on the Socratic Dæmon.

These distinguished men, Cleanthes, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, do not speak to us of the Socratic Dæmon; each speaks of a Guide or Teacher of whom he had need for himself. There was an earlier Philosopher (in the reign of Trajan) whose vocation was especially to revive the images of the past; who has revived them for English men and English children, as well as for the Greeks and Romans among whom he dwelt and whose ancestors he compared. Plutarch of Chæronea was a faithful student of the lives and acts of Philosophers, as well as of the lives and acts of Statesmen. He has a curious and characteristic dialogue on the subject of the Dæmon. I have not leisure to give you a full account of it. But I must allude to a passage which evidently expresses the judgment of the writer. Various explanations of the Dæmon have been given, some resolving it, as a modern sage might, into one of the forms of ancient superstition, some accounting for it in a purely material way, some by sheer self-deception. Then it occurs to one of the speakers as rather strange that birds, dogs, serpents should be counted more sacred to the Gods and more able to express their minds than men. And he suggests that as one who is fond of horses does not devote himself to the whole class but picks out some one of special

Possibly the divinity cares for men as much as for lower animals.

Selection of men.

promise and beauty, and devotes all his diligence to the training of that, so it may be that the Gods select a man like Socrates and educate him for higher apprehensions and greater work than the rest of his kind, and that as some horses need continual curbs or whips, while others are attentive to the least sound of the master's voice and obey that, so it may have been with the human disciple; that the divine voice speaking in his mind may have been more effectual in deterring him from wrong and guiding him to right than any force from without could have been.

I was anxious to quote these words of Plutarch because they bear directly upon the Education of the Conscience—the subject of which I undertook to speak this morning—and because they raise a most important doubt. Plutarch seems to treat it as a singular felicity or privilege of Socrates due to his difference from other men, to some rare natural gifts, that he had these internal monitions. The suggestion sounds most plausible; I know not how any thinkers of the old world could have thoroughly rejected it. And yet if it were so, whence came the influence of Socrates over his contemporaries, his influence over subsequent generations? If he could not say to all who heard him, 'My guide is also your guide, you can hear 'his voice as I do,' what right had he to converse with them, what understanding could there be between them? In that case his declaration that he only drew forth from his disciples what was in them, had no meaning or truth; he carried that in him with which they had nothing to do.

Is the Dæmon the guide of some men only or of every man?

The name Philosopher was, to one who used it faithfully, a renunciation of this boast. The Wisdom

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The seeker of Wisdom and the possessor of Wisdom.

was sought, pursued, longed for. It was always near the seeker, but it never could become a possession or property which he could hold against adverse claimants. He who tried to do that was a Sophist. That word, as Mr Grote the historian has shown, did not necessarily involve the notion of trickery or imposture. It did involve the assumption that the man held Wisdom in fee simple; that he had it to give or to sell in different portions to those who came asking for it. Socrates might think rightly or wrongly that such a profession led in a majority of cases to quackery in the vendor of the article, to much delusion and disappointment in the purchaser of the article. But apart from all such suspicions, it was the profession itself that he contended against; the lesson he taught was that the youth who wanted wisdom could not beg it, steal it, or buy it of any second-hand retailer; that there was an inexhaustible well of it, and that to this he must find his way and drink for himself. Hard though it may be not to contemplate Socrates as above his contemporaries because he was a Philosopher, the name itself and all that he said was indicated by it must perish if we give him that credit.

Socrates being a Philosopher aspires to the dignity of a man.

The Jew of Alexandria.

Before the days of Epictetus, Plutarch and Marcus Aurelius, there had appeared in Alexandria a Jew who had earnestly meditated on this puzzle and who thought he saw the solution of it. He had been formed by the study of the Law and the Prophets of his own race. He had mixed with the Greeks who brought to the city of the Ptolemies different philosophical wares. Philo was a man of much subtlety, given to indulge his fancy in conceits and allegories,—which

was the Jewish disease in his day and many other days,—with some vanity, but on the whole with an earnest purpose, a real desire for Truth. He found that in his Scriptures Wisdom was represented as coming to men—to simple men—as illuminating them concerning their own condition and the condition of their land; as teaching them of the past, and the present, and the future. Here it seemed to him was that which answered to the philosophy or search for Wisdom among the Heathens. Must not the same Wisdom who awakened the beliefs and hopes of those who had been honoured as prophets in his land have also been the source of all the strivings and aspirations of other men? These thoughts of his were mixed, as I said, with many conceits and with a strange self-exaltation (alternating with real humility), both on the ground of his Jewish descent, and of those sympathies with Gentile learning which Jews dreaded. Evidently something was wanting in his interpretation of the Sphinx riddle, if it was the human riddle; he had not seen how common life, and the wants of common men, could be connected with that lore which the great men had spoken of and had wished to impart. But he had given a hint which could not be forgotten. It made a deep impression upon certain men in the next generation who had accepted a belief which he, if he heard of it, had rejected.

His strength and his weakness.

These were the teachers in the Christian School of Alexandria, men who had exposed themselves more than the members of almost any Church to the contempt and indignation of Jews and of philosophers, of proconsuls and Emperors, by receiving the message that a crucified man was the Lord of the World—and

The Christians of Alexandria.

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Their principle.

who more than the members of almost any Church had laboured to diffuse that message. That which was peculiar in their teaching arose from the exceeding strength of their conviction that He whom they reverenced was that Wisdom or Word who had been in all ages imparting light to the consciences of men, and who had been manifested in the latter days as the Guide of human beings. This idea is especially developed in the Παιδαγωγὸς of Clemens. He had already addressed the Gentiles in what he called a Λόγος προτρεπτικός, an argument designed to shew them how all their superstitions had been withdrawing them from an unseen and divine Teacher, and how many testimonies there were in their Poets, their Philosophers, in their very legends, to the existence of such a Teacher. In the more expanded work which I have mentioned he traced the course of discipline by which this Teacher (to whom he applies that name which Plutarch opposed to the lover of birds, *the lover of men*) withdrew them from the service of pleasure and of the lower appetites, to the consciousness of Him and submission to His guidance. The habit which Philo had cultivated in his readers, and which was promoted by the circumstances of men without homely or national experiences—the habit of fantastic allegorizing—had descended upon Clemens. His indulgence in it makes the practical tendency of his treatises, as a whole, more conspicuous, though it has deservedly weakened his influence in later times. From want of confidence in his own leading principle, he was often tempted to imagine a communion between the sages of the other nations and the Jewish prophets for which there is no historical justification.

The Pædagogue of Clemens.

His attempt to connect Heathen wisdom with Jew-

Later criticism by confuting these hypotheses has added force to the truth which they overshadowed. There are in Clemens many indications how the Asceticism which, as I said in a former lecture, every philosopher of every school, nay, every man with work to do, has found needful, may pass into the frivolous Asceticism which is linked to superstition. These faults, if we observe them in an honest not a captious spirit, may be as useful to us as those merits which made Clemens one of the most remarkable of the early Greek fathers. I notice him as the first among Christian writers who distinctly and formally dealt with that question which I said was forced upon us, Whether there is any one who is in the highest and truest sense a Teacher of men, who therefore suggests what is good, controls what is mischievous, in the subordinate Teachers.

ish traditions a desertion of his principle.

Every step in the after history of the Church shewed how great was the temptation of those who ruled in it and taught in it to keep that question out of sight. While they asserted for themselves divine powers to superintend and judge the Conscience, they were continually denying, in practice if not in words, that there was any one who superintended and judged them. It was not that Philosophy was banished from the Church. After a vigorous effort to proscribe Aristotle the ecclesiastical doctors submitted to him. His dogmas not only mingled with theirs but determined what form theirs should take. Philosophy was profoundly honoured as a System of Wisdom, only it ceased to be a search after Wisdom. Therefore the belief of a Wisdom which was searching for men and educating them was inevitably obscured though it could

The doctrine of the Pædagogue, why offensive to the later Church.

Not because they dreaded the mixture of philosophical System with revelation.

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Boethius and Thomas à Kempis.

not be banished. Ever and anon some of the greatest Systematisers, like that Boethius of whom I spoke in my inaugural Lecture, in hours of sorrow and persecution discovered their need of an actual Teacher and Consoler; and their words, spoken in the solitude of some prison, were accepted by rulers and statesmen as giving them what no systems could give. An unknown monk, whose very name is disputed, though he is called Thomas à Kempis, writing in uncouth Latin and expressing more than an indifference to the scholasticism of his time, has had an influence deeper and more widely spread than that of the most learned men, only because he spoke of an unseen Teacher who conversed with the Consciences of men and to whom they might turn in their troubles and their ignorance.

Luther.

The lessons of this monk did not cease to be recognised when another monk of firmer and clearer purpose spoke to the Consciences of his contemporaries of one who could deliver them from their own evils as well as from the burthens which doctors and Systematisers had laid upon them. The Reformation which Luther inaugurated was an emphatic declaration that there is a Conscience in a man which must have a personal helper and deliverer. But Luther found this assertion made so strongly in the Bible, so much denied elsewhere, that he dwelt upon its claims to man's faith and trust till his followers began to exalt it into the place of the living Guide for whose sake the Reformer loved it.

I am approaching topics which belong more to Moral Theology. But I cannot omit to notice here that the belief of such a living Teacher as Socrates dreamed of and the Christian fathers affirmed to exist

Butler.

for all men, removes that difficulty about direction, superintendence, and supremacy, which we found had led to a strife between Butler and Dr Whewell. Neither of them had the least sympathy with the tenets of the Alexandrian teachers, both had a healthy distaste—derived either from a logical or mathematical training, still more from the practical occupations of England—for the fancies in which they indulged. But they might, I think, have discovered the best correction of these as well as a solution of the great problem of the Conscience which they have set before us in different aspects, if they had been less afraid of venturing on dangerous ground or of incurring unjust suspicion. Butler braved that peril when he accepted as the text of his *Analogy* a passage from Origen, the most fantastical of all the Alexandrian school; Clemens might have helped him quite as usefully in his *Sermons on Human Nature.*

He accepted an Alexandrian teacher in his Analogy.

Our days are different in many respects from Butler's. Amongst us, more than amongst our fathers of the last century, the questions are debated, How are we to educate ourselves, how are we to educate men and women and children of different classes, from the highest to the lowest? Till we determine what we are, what there is in these men and women and children which can be educated, till we settle whether we are to be treated and are to treat others as atoms of a mass, or whether each of us is a distinct I, and must be taught to believe that he is so and to act as if he were, I cannot conceive that we shall make much advance in the science of Education; though we may be overwhelmed with statistics that bear upon it, with new theories and mechanical arrangements

The zeal for education in our day.

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which might be profitable, if we knew for what purposes they were to be used. But if education means not the dwarfing as much as possible every individual boy and man, but the awakening him to a consciousness of what he is, to a conscience of what he ought to do, then we must press the demands which I made at the beginning of this Lecture, 'Who directs those 'who undertake to educate, who educates us when 'they leave us or their power over us is exhausted?' Those who try to evade that great controversy really settle it in their own way, which is, it seems to me, an utterly mournful way, a way that leads to despair. I cannot but hold that there is a solution of it which encourages the best hopes, which justifies the most steady and vigorous efforts, in the education of others and of ourselves.

How it drives us to the old question.

LECTURE IX.

THE OFFICE OF THE CASUIST IN THE MODERN WORLD.

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Reference to the first Lecture.

I HAVE been now lecturing for some weeks on Casuistry. I began by saying that I accepted that old word which Dr Whewell had thrown aside because he believed it not adapted to our times. I told you that if I agreed with him in his premises I should at once adopt his conclusion. It is a duty to the memory of a founder not to follow the letter of his instructions if by departing from it we can better fulfil the spirit of them. We cannot fulfil the spirit of any founder's instructions if we speak of that which does not concern our own age, however much it may have concerned his. I have adhered in this instance to language of the 17th century because I consider it the best language for the 19th century, because I think Casuistry is even more wanted for the England of our days than for the England of any previous day.

The word Casuistry used in its ordinary sense.

Am I then using the word Casuistry in some unwonted sense? There is an excuse for the suspicion, since I have told you that I entirely disclaim an office which many Casuists have deemed their principal one. I do not undertake to lay down any rules

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for the Conscience. I have tried to show you why I think no rules can be of use to the Conscience. If you say, 'Then you are deluding us by the use of 'an ancient phrase; you still call your instrument the 'same knife though it has a new blade and a new 'handle;' my answer is, 'No! I adhere strictly to 'the original sense of the word. It always meant 'the study of Cases of Conscience. That is what I 'mean by it.' The reason I gave for not liking rules of Conscience, even when they are recommended by such eloquence as Taylor's, was that they do not settle the Cases of Conscience which they undertake to settle; that they leave those cases more unsettled than ever. Cases of Conscience want, I think, a different treatment. The Conscience asks for Laws, not rules; for freedom, not chains; for Education, not suppression. It is the Casuist's business to give it aid in seeking for these blessings. What special calls there are for his occupation in this present time it is proper that I should tell you before I conclude my Course. Then you will perhaps see more clearly why I refuse to confound his work with that of the Moral Philosopher, properly so called, why I suppose Casuistry is the right introduction to Moral Philosophy.

Analysis of character and motives.

First, then, I do not think there is any kind of writing in our day which is so popular as what is called 'the Analysis of human feelings and motives.' I am not speaking of philosophical books. I may allude to them by-and-bye. I am thinking of newspapers, magazines, novels. The greatest talent, so far as I know, which is to be found in any of these, is exhibited not in the invention of plots, not in that which is properly the dramatist's art, the shewing forth

persons in action, but in the careful dissection of their acts, and of the influences which contributed to the formation of their acts. When such a craft is much pursued, there will of course be a number of bunglers in it; operators who give themselves credit for the skilful and delicate use of the knife when they have really no skill at all and are never likely to acquire any, though they may inflict considerable pain and do some permanent mischief whilst they are trying to acquire it. But if there are many of these, there are also many, both men and women, who display a degree of cleverness in these processes which would have caused our ancestors great admiration. Though there is much delicacy of observation in all the more eminent Essayists of the last century, in the best of them a calmness which I am afraid we have almost lost—though a novelist like Fielding had a very remarkable insight into many of the deceptions which men practise on themselves, as well as into some of their better impulses—yet in the peculiar kind of observations and criticisms to which I am referring, I doubt if they could bear comparison with several of our contemporaries who in mere artistical gifts may be far inferior to them. Criticism is that of which our age boasts, and in which no doubt it excels. We are nothing if not critical. Much of this faculty may be directed towards books; but the books are treated as indexes to the character of the person who has composed them. He is brought out of his hiding-place, even if the critic prefers to remain within his own. I do not regret that it is so. We ought to look upon books not as a collection of written letters, but as the utterances of living men; if they are not, they are nothing.

The skill of our times.

Books treated as exhibitions of the men

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from whom they proceed.

There may be much cruelty, often much baseness, in the exposures which are made of the ways and habits of authors who have not been the least anxious to obtrude them upon the world, who have only wished to say something which they thought they had to say. But on the whole it is good that a man should be recognised as a being, and not merely as a speaker; as having spoken out something of his own very self. At all events, for good or for evil it has come to pass that our discourses of every kind tend to assume a personal character. Our statesmen, soldiers, preachers, must either be photographed, or sketched by an artist who thinks he understands their features better than the sun does.

How we may see clearly to take motes out of our neighbour's eye.

To complain of that which one finds so much the habit of our time as this is useless and not very wise. We are a part of our time; its ways are our ways; in finding fault with them we are sure to be unconsciously finding fault with ourselves. That is just the account to which I would turn these remarks. I think a critical age wants to be reminded that it is criticising itself; and critical men that they are criticising themselves. We are apt to forget that there is a critic within us, a sterner, fairer judge than we are, who is taking account of what we do and speak and think; who is now and then saying to me when I am pouring out my righteous indignation against the robber of the ewe lamb—much more distinctly than any prophet could say it—'Thou art the man.' The Casuist is called to remind us of this fact. He must say to the critic, "Yes, this analysis of other "men's acts and motives is wonderfully clever and "acute. It may do those much good whom you desire

"to improve. But then am not I, are not you—con-
"scious of something which is nearer than that man's
"acts and motives? You pronounce what he ought
"to have done and ought not to have done. Is not
"that 'ought' and 'ought not' derived from a Con-
"science to which thou canst appeal in him because
"it is in thee?" I do not mean of course that such language should be addressed to any particular critic in the flush of his triumph. It would be merely tormenting to him, very little likely to get a hearing. But when the critical temper is diffused through a land so that it affects all classes, all ages, both sexes, when it receives so much nourishment from all that we read and all that we hear, it does seem well that this branch of our education should not be cast aside as if it had lost its meaning. No general Philosophy can supply the place of a personal Philosophy in an age which loves Personality so much as ours loves it.

Mr Thackeray's Casuistry.

I used to feel a little irritated when I read Mr Thackeray's novels, by his frequent interpellations of 'Well Sir, or Well Madam, do you treat your servants, 'or your neighbours, any better than these gentlemen 'or ladies, whom I am describing, treated theirs?' The repetition seemed to savour of mannerism; the writer appeared to be excusing offences which deserved condemnation. I do not think so now. I believe Mr Thackeray was aware of the temptation which there was in himself to forget the command, 'Judge 'not that ye be not judged;' and felt that he should be doing his readers harm if he suffered them to forget it. He was trying honestly to correct a tendency which our age cherishes, and which the most deservedly popular talent may foster. I make that re-

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mark specially for this reason. It may be said that the function I am claiming for the Casuist is rather that of the preacher. Mr Thackeray used to talk of week-day preachers, and to demand a place among them for himself. As a Sunday preacher I am inwardly and painfully convinced that no persons more require the kind of monition which he supplied than those whose regular business obliges them to tell other men of their wrong doings and temptations. Their function cannot therefore, I apprehend, supersede that of the Casuist. Clergymen may learn from him when they are preparing for their after work some of the perils to which it will expose them.

The Casuist and the Clergyman.

I might easily induce some of this class to engage in the study of Casuistry, if I could hold out a promise that they would obtain from it a set of ready-made prescriptions for various diseases of conscience, or even accurate diagnoses of those diseases. I can offer no such promise. The good which Casuistry can do us is, I conceive, of precisely the opposite kind. It warns us against the quackery of these prescriptions; it shews us why we cannot obtain any diagnosis of other men's symptoms, except by acquaintance with our own. But it is not therefore profitless to those who encounter many troublesome diseases, and are beset with demands for prompt methods of curing them. That habit of looking for other men's faults to which I have alluded is often signally punished. A man who has yielded to it may begin to accuse himself as vehemently as he has ever accused any of his fellows. He may become the most laborious analyst of his own motives; he may turn his thoughts outwards, and may pronounce them all selfish and base. That kind of

He cannot supply prescriptions for different ailments.

The study of Motives.

self-criticism will lead to no result or to very unwholesome results. It will be pursued for a while, and then the self-tormentor will beg for some anodyne or for some counter-irritant from an external penance; in time he will probably be weary of all such experiments, or will practise them only as formalities, and will determine that it is best to drift along wherever the currents of fashion and opinion may carry him. The Casuist would say to him, 'Neither this course, 'my friend, nor that will avail you. Suppose you have 'all these various or contradictory or bad motives that 'you speak of determining your acts, who determines 'the motives? What are you? The mere victim of 'motives? Not at all. Thou usest the word 'I'; the 'conscience in thee says, These motives have no right 'over me; I ought not to be their slave; they did 'not make me. Is there any one who did? If there 'is, perhaps he will help me not to be their slave.' To that issue the Casuist would lead this curious enquirer into the different forces which are driving him to the right or to the left. He may allow him to entertain himself with Taylor's descriptions of the scrupulous conscience, and the doubtful conscience, and the confident conscience; if he has leisure for such a selection, he may range himself in one class or the other. But after all he must be reminded that the Conscience in him is the man in him; he cannot divide himself from it; he cannot measure or weigh the fetters which bind it, but must above all things seek to be delivered from the fetters.

Does the man make the motive or the motive the man?

Wrong assumed as the ground of Right.

And the Casuist may help him in some degree towards this emancipation by one suggestion. He is not dealing honestly with himself when he says that

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there is nothing in him but what is mean and selfish. He may think that he is exhibiting a praiseworthy humility in saying so. It is not humility at all, nor is it the least praiseworthy. On the contrary, he is often secretly crediting himself with being better than he gives himself out to be, often thinking that he may make a little capital out of his self-depreciation. He will not be humble till he owns that there is a good always present with him, a good which he inwardly desires, a good which he ought to pursue. Then he will begin in very deed to feel the evil which is adverse to the good; he will understand that it ought in some way or other to be cast off. There is no work of the Casuist more important than this, or more needful in our days. Numbers presume that wrong is the law of their being, that right is only the exception to wrong. So far as they hold that opinion they never think that anything which they do is really wrong, however they may pretend to think so; they have no standard with which to compare it. Wrong for them is right. The Conscience protests continually against this horrible inversion. The conscience of a right which I cannot let go holds me up when I am most wrong. And the same Conscience says that the wrong into which I have fallen never can be anything but wrong; anything but a contradiction of the law under which I exist.

Systems based upon the Examination of motives.

II. These are practical topics concerning every man, the most ignorant as well as the wisest. It is with such that the Casuist is occupied. He is to be testifying in season and out of season, that the subject which he speaks of is a subject for books only because it is a subject for men and women, and that it would

remain the same if all the books that ever have been written were burnt to ashes. But for this very reason he must mingle in the battle of the books; he cannot overlook the systems which philosophers are constructing, and sending forth into the world. That is the second topic of which I meant to speak. We have heard in these Lectures that there are Systems, very popular in our day, which present men as the slaves of certain motives, which use the analyses of these motives to determine what men will be, must be, and therefore ought to be. We have heard again that as the necessary corollary from these maxims, they do not allow Right and Wrong to be ultimate distinctions. Such teachers may have done good in telling us what motives are likely to influence us in different circumstances; they may have done great good by correcting certain false impressions about these motives which have been made the basis of legislation or of individual actions. Of all this good the Casuist may gladly avail himself. But he is bound to struggle to the death against their primary assumption; that simply destroys what he maintains to be the root of a man's existence. If the System which starts from this denial were only a System, only for philosophical men, he might leave it to itself. But it embodies and justifies all those tendencies which I have just spoken of; those which take a religious form in some, a form of worldly Cynicism in others. They conspire with the popular taste for detecting and exposing other men's motives, with the more dangerous habit of detecting and exposing our own. Though they seem to treat all motives as inevitable and therefore as harmless, they do not involve the least tolerance or tenderness to those who

The deniers of Right and Wrong not specially tolerant.

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commit what are to be called not sins or evils but only 'acts inconsistent with the interests of the Community.' A man against whom, under that title, Mr Bentham hurls his anathemas, might, except for the honour of the thing, as soon be called a bad man according to the manner of the ancients. The Conscience of the philosopher slips in the obsolete phrases which he ridicules with the indignation which appertains to them. The Casuist who maintains the language of the Conscience to be the true language relieves the Benthamic curses of many troublesome circumlocutions; he may lead the curser to hesitate a little before he deals them out.

The Emotional Nature and the Nervous System.

Similar remarks apply to that philosophy which would make our acts depend in a great measure upon our emotions and upon certain conditions of our physical organization. Whatever any *psychologist* may tell us about these emotions,—even if he succeeds in analyzing the feeling of a mother to her child mainly into certain feelings connected with the roundness and smoothness of its cheeks—let us receive thankfully, in the last instance with the wonder which some of old deemed the first step to knowledge. Whatever wisdom the teacher has obtained at second hand from great *physiologists* about the brain and the nervous system, let us accept, so far as we can enter into it, with even more fervent gratitude. But the Casuist having done all homage to these lessons, will torment his instructor with these rude and troublesome notes and queries—'Yes! that is very remarkable indeed. And do these 'emotions then and this nervous system make me? 'Did not you say I had them? You might not perhaps 'think it worth while to give me the additional infor-

'mation who *I* am?'. No! that is not in the bond. And therefore there is a function for the Casuist, who asserts that it is not only in his bond to consider that question, but that it is precisely the one which he has to consider. In this case also it is not the System which he is at all anxious to confute. But if there is a disposition in our days to make our emotions, our nervous system, or anything else, an excuse for not doing what we ought to do, or being what we are created to be—if that disposition as well as the faculty which I have claimed for our age are both flattered by the assurance that the highest philosophy is occupied in the analysis of these emotions, tracing the processes by which the nervous system becomes our supreme ruler; he must repel the negations of the system that he may maintain his own position.

The prevalence and popularity of the doctrine that Society is to make the Conscience.

So it is also with that doctrine about Society of which we have heard so much in these Lectures. Society has been used as a bugbear to frighten us; the Conscience must do what it bids or cease to be. If that is Society there are no terms to be kept with it. The Casuist's business is in the name of the Conscience to mock it and defy it. He must be more fierce in his mockery and defiance than he might have thought it necessary to be in any former age. For this theory is put forth as the last result of modern wisdom. It must spread wherever luxury abounds; wherever the passion for liberty is changed for an easy profession of liberality; wherever Opinion under one pretext or other is confounded with Truth. The worshippers of Society may soon tear each other in pieces when they have to settle how its votes shall be taken, who is to be the returning officer. But all lazy people will agree

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that somehow the strongest or the most numerous ought to decide what they shall do or leave undone. If the Casuist merged his work in that of the Moral Philosopher he could scarcely, I conceive, hold his ground in this conflict. He would then be always harassed with the doubt, 'Am I to find the individual man somewhere outside of Society? Or am I to trace his doings in Society?' The satisfaction of that doubt seems to me this. You cannot contemplate the individual man out of Society: you will scarcely find him among savages if you look diligently for him. But you must vindicate his position in order that you may shew what Society is; of what it consists. If it does not consist of I's, of Persons, the Moralist has no concern with it. If it does consist of I's, of Persons, begin with asserting that character for it, then go on to investigate the relations in which the members of it stand to each other. That means, as I conceive, when translated into the book speech, 'Begin with Casuistry; go 'on to Moral Philosophy. First make it clear what you 'mean by a Person; that you will do when you make 'it clear what you mean by a Conscience; then treat 'these Persons as if they did form real bodies, and tell 'us out of history, not out of your own fancy, what 'these bodies are.'

Why Casuistry should precede Moral Philosophy.

Hereafter then, in any Course I may deliver upon Ethics, I shall be in the strictest sense occupied with Society; but with Society, as consisting of Persons; with Society, as implying the existence of a Conscience; strong in proportion as that is strong, weak as that is weak. We ought not to overlook any theory about Society which has had considerable influence on any considerable number of men. But no theory ought to

occupy us except so far as it is an interpretation of facts. The facts must come first; we should collect them as carefully as we can, in as natural an order as we can; if the theories are adequate to account for them, let us erect any trophies to the authors of them that we think will honour them most.

Morals and Politics.

For this reason I rejoice greatly that I belong to a country which is so little interested in Mental Philosophy merely as such, so much interested in Politics, as England is. I believe the soundest Moral Science will be that which is demanded by the necessities of Practical Politics; that out of such a Science a living and Practical not a technical and artificial Mental Philosophy may in time be developed. The Moralist never maintains his own position so well as when he asserts the highest dignity for the Politician. The separation between them has been an intolerable mischief; there will be Pæans in earth and heaven to celebrate their reconciliation.

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